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HISTORY

OF THE

ANCIENT BRITONS,

FROM

THE EARLIEST PERIOD

TO

THE INVASION OF THE SAXONS.

COMPILED FROM THE ORIGINAL AUTHORITIES.

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BY THE

REV. J. A. GILES, D.C.L.

LATE FELLOW OF C.C.C. OXFORD;

AUTHOR OF THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF THOMAS A BECKET,

AND EDITOR OF PATRES ECCLESIÆ ANGLICANÆ.

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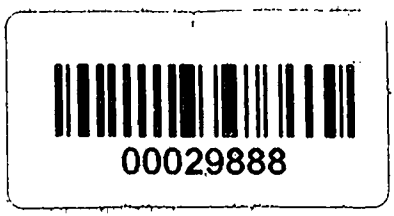
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PREFACE.

HAVING long felt the want of a detailed history of the first inhabitants of Britain; founded upon the accounts which the Greeks and Romans have left us of their connection with this island, I have endeavoured in these volumes, as far as was in my power, to supply the deficiency. The sources from which the work is compiled are extensive, it is true, as regards the number of writers from whom our knowledge is derived, but in general bulk, and as far as concerns the information which we gain from them, they are remarkably scanty. They are all comprised in one volume of "Historical Documents concerning the Ancient Britons," which forms the Appendix to this work; so that the reader will have at hand all the authorities for every statement which this work contains, and may immediately verify every fact for himself. As in the Preface to the Historical Documents, I have given all the information which is necessary on the writers whose works are contained in that volume, it would be superfluous to recapitulate the same here. It is important, however, to mention one peculiarity of the present work, which, as it has commended itself to my choice after long consideration, will, I hope, be equally approved by the reader. I have abstained from attempting to give colouring or life to those facts

of which the contemporary historians have left us only a bare skeleton, or an inanimate sketch. I cannot but regret, that historians in general have so widely departed from this rule; for by indulging their own imaginations, and by putting their own construction upon facts, though they may have succeeded in making their work philosophical, yet this advantage has been attended with the loss of its historical character. To avoid this departure from historic truth, no plan seems so successful as to introduce all important parts of the narrative in the words of the contemporary writer, and, if possible, of one who has been an eye-witness of the facts which he records. What account of the invasion of Britain by Cæsar, and of the adventures which befel him during his short stay in the island, can be so interesting, or so authentic, as that which Cæsar himself has left in his own Commentaries? Consistently with this principle, the reader will find that I have related the wars of Cæsar, of Claudius, Agricola, Severus, Carausius, and others, in the very words of the historian who then lived, or who came nearest to their times.

Another rule, of almost equal importance with the former, has been rigidly adhered to; namely, to neglect all unfounded statements and views of modern writers; some of whom have indulged in fancies of the most puerile and trifling character, often with the view of supporting some political or religious theory of their own, but which does not depend upon the authority of ancient writers.

Though the present work is not the first which pretends to the character of a regular detailed history of the Ancient Britons, yet an examination of those which have preceded, will, it is believed, lead the

reader to the conclusion, that the subject has never before been treated so fully, with strict regard to real history, and in exclusion of all fabulous legends.

The first notices of Britain are found in the Grecian and Roman writers; in the works of Gildas, Nennius, Bede, and Richard of Cirencester, who in the fourteenth century copied from an ancient Roman writing now lost. For information on these writers, the reader is referred to the Preface of the Historical Documents before mentioned.

Besides those contemporary writers, the middle ages furnish a long list of names of those who have noticed incidentally the Ancient Britons; but they all wrote at second hand, and can be of little use as authorities to us, who know probably more of the Ancient Britons than they did. Such were Aldhelm, Alcuin, Eddius, Asser, the authors of the Saxon Chronicle, Florence of Worcester, William of Malmesbury, Galfridus of Llandaff, author of the Liber Llandavensis, Henry of Huntingdon, Ordericus Vitalis, Geoffrey of Monmouth, and a vast number of other monastic historians, who have all more or less referred to the subject.

But the first person in modern times who attempted on sound principles to throw light on British Antiquities, was Leland the Antiquary, who in the reign of Henry VIII. made a tour through the island, examined every spot where historical occurrences were said to have happened, and collected the fruits of his labours into his two works, Collectanea and Itinera.

The next writer who added to the knowledge of British Antiquities was Speed, author of the Theatre of Great Britain, which cost the author the labour of many years, and was a most valuable addition to the existing store of works on our domestic history.

But all these writers treated of our history in general, and made no more than incidental mention of the Ancient Britons. About the year 1600 appeared that valuable work, Camden's Britannia, in which the first attempt was made in the early part of the work to reduce into a connected narrative all that was left by the Classical writers concerning Ancient Britain and its inhabitants. But this narrative is necessarily much abridged, and contains merely an outline of the subject.

Other works more immediately touching on our present subject are the Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitates of Archbishop Usher, and the Origines Sacræ of Stillingfleet. But these also principally concern the state of religion amongst the Britons, and even with the narrow limits of that subject many legends are admitted as historical facts, which deserve to be banished to the regions of Romance.

Within the last few years, another work has been published on the Ancient Britons, entitled, "Researches into the ecclesiastical and political state of Ancient Britain under the Roman emperors, with observations upon the principal events and characters connected with the Christian religion during the first five centuries. By the late Rev. Francis Thackeray, A.M. formerly of Pembroke College, Cambridge. Lond. T. Cadell, Strand, MDCCCXLIII."

On coming to examine this work, I found that it would be of great assistance in compiling my own, but that its long digressions on religious subjects, aspirations for the success of the Christian Church, and other similar peculiarities, entirely disqualified it for being received as a History of Ancient Britain.

As the present times are singularly distinguished from those which immediately preceded, by religious

discussions, originating often in party bias, and conducted with warmth which rather perplexes than illustrates the subject, I cannot suffer this opportunity to pass by without declaring my conviction, that both parties have rather established their skill in polemics, than shewn a faithful desire to arrive at truth. Whilst it has been the object with the one to prove the antiquity of the Church in England, and its independence of the see of Rome; their adversaries have laboured to prove, that all ecclesiastical establishments in the West owe their origin to missions from the capital of Italy. But both parties have in this discussion been fighting for a shadow. The pretensions of the Church of Rome must be assailed or defended upon their own merits; if they are false, no antiquity, no planting of colonies, or sending of missions, can maintain them. If true, no time can make them obsolete. As a work on the Ancient Britons must necessarily treat on a subject so prominent in all European history, as the establishment of the Christian Religion, I think it right to have indulged in these remarks, and to invite the reader to bestow the same impartiality in reading the facts here collected, which I have myself shewn in bringing them together, and in dealing with the whole subject. History is no better than a romance, if those who write it bring to their task preconceived opinions, or if readers cast away the book which contains unwholesome or unpalatable truths.

As our information concerning the race of men who first inhabited this island, like all other history, must be obtained either from books, inscriptions found on ancient monuments, or from remains found scattered throughout the country, or buried beneath the surface of the ground, it is right to caution the reader, that he

is not to expect from this work a full account of the various coins, inscriptions, and monuments found in this island, and supposed to belong to the period treated of in this volume. It is very uncertain by whom such coins were struck, or who were the builders of the monuments in question. In short, it is to be borne in mind, that the history of the Ancient Britons, as it may be gathered from books alone, has been here treated of, but for the numismatics, architecture, and antiquities supposed to belong to that people, the reader must consult other books devoted almost exclusively to the subject.

Neither do the geography and topography of Britain enter more than incidentally into the plan of the present work. These are subjects which require a separate consideration; and, as our knowledge of them is remarkably little, they cannot fail to cause the student no small labour and distraction of mind. In the volume of Historical Documents, are given those portions of the ancient geographers, Ptolemy and others, together with the extracts from the Notitia Imperii, and Itinerarium Antonini, which concern the history of Britain.

J. A. G.

Bampton, Sept. 1, 1847.

CONTENTS.

CHAP. I. Introduction.—Grecian, Roman, and Phœnician Navigators. 1

II. Cæsar's invasion of Britain in the month of August, B. C. 55. 14

III. Cæsar's second invasion. 29

IV. Geoffrey of Monmouth—His fabulous history of Britain before the time of Cæsar—His account of Cæsar's invasion. 45

V. Sensation produced at Rome by the British expedition—Augustus—Notices of Britain by Poets and Geographers. 53

VI. Britain left to itself by Tiberius—the foolish expedition of Caligula—Claudius—Conquest of Britain by his general Plautius—Vespasian afterwards emperor. 69

VII. Plautius—Vespasian—Ostorius Scapula—Caractacus. 80

VIII. Nero's cruel reign—The Britons revolt under Boadicea: Camalodunum, London, and Verulam are burnt—Suetonius Paulinus returns from Anglesey, and defeats the Britons with immense slaughter. 96

IX. The emperors Galba, Otho, Vitellius—Petronius Turpilianus, Trebellius Maximus, and Vettius Bolanus, governors of Britain. 110

X. The reigns of Vespasian, Titus and Domitian—Petilius Cerealis, Julius Frontinus, and Julius Agricola, Proprætors of Britain—Wars of Agricola, defeat of Galgacus, and the Caledonians—Final settlement of the Roman province in Britain. 120

XI. Sallustius Lucullus, Lieutenant of Britain—Reigns of Nerva, Trajan, and Hadrian—Little known of Britain for many years—its trade and miscellaneous productions—the Druids—their fall. 153

XII. Whether Christianity was introduced into Britain before A. D. 120.—St. Paul—St. Peter—Simon Zelotes—Pomponia Græcina—Claudia—Gildas. 179

XIII. Reigns of Antoninus Pius—Marcus Aurelius—Commodus.—Lollius Urbicus, Ulpius Marcellus, and Clodius Albinus, governors of Britain—Lucius, one of the tributary kings of the Britons, converted to Christianity. 200

XIV. The reigns of Pertinax, Didius Julianus, and Severus.—Albinus, governor of Britain—Contest between Severus Albinus and Niger—Battle of Lyons—Virius Lupus, governor of Britain—Severus arrives in Britain in 208—his invasion of Caledonia in 209—builds the wall across the island in 210—dies at York in 211. 219

XV. Reigns of Caracalla and Geta—Ossian's poems, Fingal, &c.—Macrinus—Elagabalus—Alexander Severus, &c.—Carinus—Diocletian and Maximian—Carausius revolts in Britain—is murdered by Allectus—Allectus is slain, and Britain restored to the empire by Constantius. 246

XVI. Persecution of the Christians from A. D. 303 to 313—less violent in Britain—The legend of the passion of Saint Alban probably much interpolated. 272

XVII. Resignation of Diocletian and Maximian, A. D. 305—Galerius and Constantius emperors—Constantius in Britain—Constantine escapes to his father Constantius—Constantine the Great defeats Maxentius, and becomes sole emperor—Synods of Arles and Nice. 282

XVIII. Sons of Constantine the Great, Constantine II, Constans, and Constantius—Councils of Nice and Sardica—Rebellion and defeat of Magnentius a Briton—Paulus Catena in Britain—Julian in Gaul—Lupicinus. 301

XIX. Constantius—Religious disputes—Synod of Rimini—British Bishops—Julian—Jovian—Valentinian—Picts and Scots—Britain saved by Theodosius. 313

XX. Emperors Gratian and Valentinian II.—Death of Valens—Gratian appoints Theodosius, emperor of the East—Gratian's neglect of his imperial duties—disaffection of the troops—Maximus revolts in Britain—death of Gratian—Maximus defeated and slain by Theodosius. 326

XXI. Britain exhausted by successive emigrations—Theodosius—Chrysanthus viceroy of Britain—Arcadius and Honorius emperors—Stilicho—Picts and Scots—Marcus, and Gratian Municeps, tyrants in Britain, slain by their soldiers—Constantine emperor in Britain—conquers Gaul and Spain—is slain by Constantius. 341

XXII. Britain again free—governed by her native rulers—not able to enjoy the privilege of freedom—the Christian religion already corrupted—the Arian heresy—the Pelagian heresy—Germanus and Lupus come from Gaul. 356

XXIII. The Missions of Palladius and St. Patrick to Ireland. 377

XXIV. Enfeebled state of Britain in the fifth century—The Britons apply to Rome—They apply a second time to Ætius—The groans of the Britons—Vortigern—Aurelius Ambrosius—The Saxons, Hengist and Horsa—The history of the Ancient Britons ends—Conclusion. 381

ADDITIONAL NOTES. 395

INDEX. 407

HISTORY

OF THE

Ancient Britons.

CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTION.—GRECIAN, ROMAN, AND PHŒNICIAN NAVIGATORS.

It is the practice of those who have written the history of their country, to complain of the obscurity in which its earliest annals are involved. This complaint indeed is too well founded to admit of doubt: for there is no nation, now existing on the earth, whose history can be traced back with certainty more than two thousand five hundred years. The history of the Assyrian and Egyptian monarchies exists only in shadow and outline, and the contradictory accounts which have come down to us in the pages of historians suffice to shew, that we know next to nothing of their real history. The only exception to this statement is to be made in favour of the books of Moses, which doubtlessly exhibit a picture of oriental life, and that principally domestic life, which existed in Asia at a period of very remote antiquity. But the writings of Moses carry us back no farther into the past than the space of about six thousand years, whereas there is the most conclusive evidence that

the world has existed in its present state more than six times that limited period. It appears therefore that our knowledge of the past is confined to a very narrow compass, compared with the infinite duration of time which has elapsed. But however mortifying this may be to man, whose expansive intellect grasps at eternity, it is equally evident that all our researches into the history of the past must have a limit somewhere. Man is a finite being, whose existence is bounded to a certain duration which he cannot pass: his powers of observation are as limited as his existence; the imperfection of his sensual structure, through which alone knowledge is conveyed to his intellect, is such, that it is unable to furnish indefinite aliment to the mind; even if the mind were not on the other hand equally unable to retain all the impressions which the external senses can furnish. Thus the human intellect, like our physical organization, takes cognizance of a very small part of the universe, whether of mind or matter. That which has preceded our own immediate career is at some point or other as effectually concealed from our view as that which is to follow it. This process has no doubt been going on ever since the first creation of the human race: but previously to the fifteenth century, its operation was much more rapid than it has been since that time: the province of history was then continually liable to be narrowed and curtailed by the destruction of its oldest documents, which the slow labours of the scribe were unable to replace or to compensate. We are at liberty to believe that this onward movement, by which, as fresh fields have been opened, preceding ones have been closed to the historian, has been continually in operation, at a

period extending far beyond the earliest of our existing records. It is in vain therefore that we push our enquiries beyond the usual barriers which exclude us from the domains of hoary antiquity. The labour of a life is vainly spent in exploring the darkness which envelopes them, and the only fruit which has as yet been gathered by the most successful antiquarians is limited to a few hints and surmises, founded as much on a general knowledge of human affairs as on any certain basis of facts furnished by the subject of their enquiries. The inference to which these remarks lead us is no doubt mortifying to the mind of the ardent enquirer, but he may derive consolation from the ample materials which remain. The actual province of history is sufficiently extensive, without our attempting to penetrate into the obscurity which precedes it: the achievements of man, in the many and diversified forms under which his race is developed, will furnish matter sufficient to occupy and fill the mind of the most enthusiastic enquirer, even if his researches are limited to the history of that country only to which he owes his birth.

These observations will prepare the reader to expect that the history of England cannot be carried back to a more remote period than other European countries, whose circumstances are nearly the same. Indeed its insular position, whereby it is in a way cut off from the rest of the known world, would naturally retard its civilization; and its greater distance from Greece and Italy, whence we know all European learning to have flowed, would be an additional reason why its progress in improvement and the arts of civilized life should have been more slow, and have commenced at a later period than that

of Gaul and other countries more advantageously placed by nature.

If then we would wish to picture to ourselves the state of these islands some centuries before the Christian era, we must suppose all the improvements of art and civilization, which now cover the face of the country, to be swept away. There were no canals, no railways or public roads, no towns, castles, or cities. The scenery was no doubt as beautiful as nature and a climate favourable for vegetation could make it. Forests of gigantic oaks covered two-thirds of the whole country, and herds of wild deer bounding through the forests made every thing look full of life and motion. Towards the south, large tracts of country consisted, as they consist at present, of heath and chalk lands, whose arid soils and iron-bound surface disqualified them for the production of other than trees of a dwarfish and stunted growth. On the eastern and western coasts, more particularly in Lincolnshire and Somersetshire, lay extensive swamps to which the sea had access, and this, augmented by the overflowing rivers, rendered large tracts of territory unfit for the residence of either man or beast. Fishes and reptiles were the natural inhabitants of these swamps: the bustard and the black cock roamed over the open downs, and at some period or other we are sure that the hyæna and the bear prowled among the woods, leaving, as it would appear, but small probability of there being a very dense human population in those early times.

And this leads us to the enquiry, where is man, the lord of the earth, and of the other animals? Have we no mention of the human inhabitants of Britain, among the remains which tell us of the other species

of animal life by which it was peopled? The monuments which the first inhabitants of this country have left behind them are few indeed, but cast in a gigantic mould. The names of Stonehenge, Avebury, and the Rollright stones[a], are familiar to the reader. Structures of enormous size, and consisting of the most monstrous stones, to move which no inconsiderable knowledge of mechanics would be required, they nevertheless tell us no more than the fact of their erection. It would be idle to attempt to prove that they are the works of men, for the form of their construction plainly shews them to have been erected by design; but whether they were built as tombs, as palaces, as temples, or as fortresses, it is useless to conjecture. They appear to be the very oldest memorials of the existing human race: they have stood nearly two thousand years with evidently no greater alteration of their form or appearance than the silent crumbling of surface which a northern winter is calculated to produce; they are more massive than the temples of Agrigentum, or the Cyclopian walls of Argos and Mycenæ: they are of a construction ruder than that of the Pyramids of Egypt: and whether they were erected within the period of authentic history, which commences seven hundred years before Christ, or many thousand years earlier, it is impossible to discover, and useless to conjecture. The slight notices of these ancient fabrics, which occur in the classic authors, will be exhibited in chronological order in the Appendix to this work.

Setting aside therefore the architectural remains

[a] For accounts of these the reader is referred to works written expressly on the subject. The Tollmen, and Logan stones found principally in Cornwall, are evidently natural productions.

which are still found in Britain, we may enquire whether any other relics have been recovered from the soil likely to throw light on the history of the tribes which once inhabited our country: but the result of this investigation is alike meagre and unavailing. Warlike weapons and vessels of domestic use have been continually disinterred by the plough and the spade, but the tale which they tell has little to interest us. The weapons which have been found in Britain are swords, spear and arrow heads and targets, and it is probable that most of these are of a date posterior to the invasion of Julius Cæsar. Whatever may be their antiquity, the information which they furnish is but scanty: such weapons have been common to all nations, and denote habits of life which at one time or another have prevailed in every known country of the world. The same result will attend any enquiries that may be made into the domestic life of the early inhabitants of Britain, as evinced by existing specimens of rude and ill-shaped pottery.

Nor does the science of Numismatics furnish any aid to the knowledge of our earliest tribes: nothing has been discovered that can be assigned to an earlier date than the first century of our æra; so that in the absence of monumental documents, we are of necessity driven to look for our information in the written records which have come down to us from the Greeks and Romans; for, as will hereafter be shewn, the traditions of the Britons themselves, which in the reign of Henry II were translated by Geoffrey of Monmouth out of the British tongue, however for the latter portion of the history they may contain the germs of truth, are for the period antecedent to Cæsar's invasion utterly unworthy of credit and almost of notice.

It is a theory generally received amongst the learned,

that the western parts of Europe were at an early period inhabited by a race of people known by the name of Celts. The earliest notice of these people occurs in the pages of the Greek historian Herodotus, who wrote about the year B. C. 450. "The river Ister," says this writer[b], "flows through the whole length of Europe, beginning from the Celtæ, who are the furthest people in Europe after the Cynetæ towards the setting sun." In another place the same author says[c], "The river Ister, beginning from the Celtæ and the city of Pyrene, flows through the whole of Europe: for the Celtæ are beyond the pillars of Hercules, and they border on the Cynesians, who are the furthest people in Europe towards the west."

A third extract from the same writer is interesting and valuable, because it makes the first mention that we find in any book now extant of these islands[d].

"Of the western extremities of Europe I cannot speak with certainty; for I do not admit that there is any river called Eridanus by the barbarians, emptying itself into the sea towards the north, where they say amber comes from: nor do I know any thing of the Cassiterides [*tin-islands*], from which we get tin. For the name Eridanus, which is Grecian, not barbarian, and derives its origin from some poet, proves what I say; and, on the other hand, I have never been able with all my pains to meet with any one who could tell me from his own knowledge, that the farther parts of Europe are sea."

The next writer who mentions the British isles is Aristotle, who wrote about 340 years before Christ. His words are these: "Beyond the pillars of Hercules is the ocean which flows round the earth. In it are

[b] Herod. Hist. iv. 49. [c] Ibid. ii. 33. [d] Ibid iii 115.

two islands, and those very large, called Britannic, Albion and Ierne, which are larger than those I before mentioned, and lie beyond the Celts. There are also two others not less than these, Taprobane [Ceylon], which is beyond the Indians, and lies obliquely towards the mainland, and Phebol, situated over against the Arabian gulf; besides several small islands, near the Britannic isles and Iberia, and encircling as with a coronet the earth, which, as we have already said, is an island[e]."

From this passage, we perceive that Aristotle, who was the preceptor of Alexander the great, had a correct knowledge of the position and general nature of the British isles, as far as it was possible for a writer of that age to obtain it. The only way to Britain was by sea through the straits between Gibraltar and Tangier, called at that time the pillars of Hercules: and the intervening countries, namely, Spain, Gaul, and perhaps part of Germany, he supposes to have been occupied by the Celts.

After Aristotle, another interval of 180 years brings us to the time of Polybius, who wrote about B. C. 160. He has the following passage[f]: "Perhaps some persons will enquire, why, having spoken so fully of places in Libya [Africa] and Iberia [Spain], we have not said more of the outlet at the pillars of Hercules, nor of the sea beyond, and of the things peculiar to those parts, nor of the Britannic isles, and the mode of preparing tin, nor moreover of the gold and silver mines of Iberia, concerning which writers have discoursed so largely and so contradictorily."

A fourth extract, from a work of doubtful authen-

[e] De Mundo, §. 3.

[f] Polyb. Hist. iii. 57.

ticity, still remains. The writer passes for the poet Orpheus, who in the age preceding the Trojan war is said to have accompanied the Argonauts on their expedition to fetch the golden fleece from Colchis. If the poem which goes under his name and treats of this famous expedition were genuine, the value of the allusion therein found to the island of Ireland more than 1200 years before the Christian era would be incalculable: but that this poem is a forgery, has long been admitted on all hands. Some have ascribed the fabrication to Onomacritus, who lived B. C. 560, and others to a writer of a still later period. In any case, however, the passage in question conveys one of the earliest notices which have come to us of the British isles, and as such we give it to the reader in a translation as literal as the difference of idiom will allow.

[The ship Argo is supposed to speak to the Minyæ, i. e. the Argonauts.]

> For now to sad and bitter suffering I
> Shall be consigned, if near Iernian isles I come.
> Thus having said she held her tongue; forthwith the soul
> Of the Minyæ was densely clouded:.....
> But much they pondered in their thoughtful breasts
> How they might slay and cast as food for fishes
> Medea, ill-starred bride, and so appease the fury.
> Had not the son of Æson quick perceived it,
> And by entreaty calm'd the rage of each.
> But when they heard the chief's voice uttering truth,
> Soon on their seats they sat, and caught their oars,
> And knowingly Ancæus held the helm,
> And passed th' Iernian isle, whilst in the rear
> Came dashing on the darkling roaring storm.

These passages, which contain all the allusions made by the classic writers to the British isles previously to

the time of Cæsar, are sufficient to shew that the existence of those islands was no secret to the Greeks, and it is not difficult to discover through what channel they obtained their information. It is evident from the foregoing extracts that the very little which the Greeks knew about Britain came through the straits of Gibraltar; and it is equally clear, that the islands from which they obtained tin were supposed to lie in that direction. The exertions of that indefatigable historian Herodotus failed to discover where those islands actually were situated: he had never met with a person who had visited them. But it seems there was a substantial reason for concealing these islands from the knowledge of the Greeks: what this reason was, we learn from Strabo, who wrote four hundred years after Herodotus. That geographer gives us the following narrative[h].

"The Cassiterides [tin islands] are ten in number, and lie near each other in the ocean, towards the north from the haven of the Artabri. One of them is desert, but the others are inhabited by men in black cloaks, clad in tunics reaching to the feet, and girt about the breast; walking with staves, and bearded like goats. They subsist by their cattle, leading for the most part a wandering life: and having metals of tin and lead, these and skins they barter with the merchants for earthenware and salt and brazen vessels. Formerly the Phœnicians alone carried on this traffic from Gadeira [Cadiz], concealing the passage from every one: and when the Romans followed a certain ship-master, that they also might find the mart, the ship-master from jealousy purposely ran his vessel upon a shoal, and leading on those who followed him into the same fatal disaster, he himself escaped on a fragment of his

[h] Hist. v. 10.

vessel, and received from the state the value of the cargo which he had lost. But the Romans, nevertheless, after repeated efforts, discovered the passage; and when Publius Crassus[1], passing over thither, discovered that the metals were obtained at a little depth, and that the people were undisturbed by war, and beginning to turn their attention to maritime affairs, he pointed out this passage to all who were willing to attempt it, though it was longer than the passage to Britain."

Thus it was the mercantile policy of the Phœnicians which kept the Greeks in comparative ignorance of the Cassiterides or tin islands, until the adventure related to Strabo, and which seems to have happened in the age immediately preceding that of Julius Cæsar, laid open the trade to the adventurous Romans. It is well known that the Phœnicians, as well as their colony Carthage, made distant voyages at a very early period, when the Greeks and other mediterranean nations ventured only to pass timidly from one island to another. So far had they carried their spirit of commercial enterprise, that they had actually sailed round Africa several centuries before the Christian era. Of this fact we may be certain; for they reported at home that they had seen the sun on their right hand the whole of their journey from the Red Sea to the pillars of Hercules; and this statement, which Herodotus at once set down as an impossibility, and therefore a proof of their falsehood, is to us the most undeniable criterion of their sincerity.

That the Phœnicians extended their voyages as far as Britain, is by no means improbable in itself, from the enterprising character of that people, even without the positive proof of the fact which the narrative of

[1] Of this individual nothing further is known.

Strabo furnishes. It is not however certain that the Greeks considered the Cassiterides to be the same island as Britain: indeed it would appear that the Scilly islands, and perhaps the headlands of Cornwall and Devonshire, which the foreign merchants took for islands, were what passed under that denomination. There was at one time an opinion among the learned, that an Atlantic continent existed not far from the pillars of Hercules, which has since been buried in the ocean. This is however highly improbable; from the time which must elapse before such a continent could have been entirely swallowed up, it is evident that it could not have existed within the period of time to which our existing histories belong. We may therefore with greater probability infer, that this notion was made up of reports which Phœnician travellers made at home of the distant islands and countries which they had discovered in their voyages beyond the straits. Teneriffe and Madeira may possibly have been known to this daring nation of sailers; and Thule, the celebrated *ne plus ultra* of the poets, seems to have been situated somewhere beyond the British islands.

But the most certain indication of the trade carried on by the Phœnicians in Britain is the fact, that tin was an article in daily use among the Greeks even as early as the days of Homer. Tin and brass, by which was meant copper, were articles supplied to the neighbouring nations by the Sidonians; and it is difficult to imagine where their large supplies of these metals, particularly the former, could have been obtained, unless it be admitted that they procured them in Cornwall and the Scilly islands, where they have always been so abundant.

Lead also is mentioned by Strabo in the passage

before quoted, as one of the exports of Britain. Now this metal is at present found principally in Derbyshire, Cardiganshire, Denbighshire, Yorkshire, and Northumberland, and it is hardly probable that the Phœnicians, who had not extended their dominions more than 100 miles from the sea at home in Asia, should have travelled twice or even three times that distance up the country in Britain. We may be content to believe, that the south-western parts of Britain were those mostly, if not solely, frequented by the Phœnician merchants; and it has been noticed by writers, that many names of places on the Cornish coast still bear traces of a Phœnician or Oriental etymology[k], but the great distance which separated these northern regions from their native Phœnicia, makes it highly improbable that so many persons of that state settled in Britain as to have much influence either over the language or over the manners of the ancient inhabitants.

[k] Bochart, Geog. Sacra, quoted by Thackeray, vol. i. p. 9. I cannot forbear, whilst on the subject of etymology, to express my utter disbelief of the fancies into which some modern writers have suffered themselves to be led. Diodorus Siculus, speaking of the priests of Gaul, says, that they were called by the people Saronides. Mr. Gilbert, in his Celtic Researches, says that, this word is British, being a compound of Sêr *stars*, and honydd "*one who points out.*" This is reasonable in comparison with some of the etymologies in which Celtic scholars have indulged. It is not consistent with the plan of this work to enter upon such topics: otherwise much might be said on the analogy between present European languages and those which existed in Europe eighteen hundred years ago. There is also some curious information to be gleaned from the accounts which have been written from time to time on the opening of ancient tombs and barrows: but it has not yet been clearly discovered to which of the nations that have inhabited Britain these mounds are to be ascribed; I cannot therefore admit such evidence among the authentic written or monumental documents which it is the purpose of these volumes to supply.

CHAP. II.

CÆSAR'S INVASION OF BRITAIN IN THE MONTH OF AUGUST BEFORE CHRIST 55.

THE conquests of Julius Cæsar in Gaul were dictated by no animosity towards the natives of that half civilized country: the victorious general was merely carving out on the naked bodies of his brave but astonished enemies, material for the honours which awaited him on his return to Rome. His ambition, whetted by the rivalry of Pompey, could not find a subject to exhaust itself upon in the peninsula of Italy. The countries surrounding the Mediterranean had already been appropriated as fields of triumph by divers enterprising leaders, or had fallen into the tranquil condition of Roman provinces. Germany and Gaul alone remained; and the former of these two countries would be most readily attacked, when the latter should have been subdued; for lofty mountains and brave mountaineers intervened between the Italian provinces and the fertile plains of Bavaria, Hungary, and Austria; whilst on the other hand, the easy voyage from Genoa to Marseilles had already introduced Roman civilization and Roman influence into the heart of independent Gaul. It was but ready foresight on the part of Julius Cæsar, which pointed out the apparently obvious scheme of annexing

all Gaul to the Roman empire. He was aware of the existence of a northern ocean lying beyond that country, which would prevent its hardy natives from receiving such unlimited reinforcements, as the vast continent which lay behind the Germans would furnish to resist his arms. It was therefore in a spirit of practicable though bold enterprise, that in the year before Christ 58, Julius Cæsar began that career of conquest which led to his elevation above all his contemporary citizens, and would have raised him, if he had so pleased, above the laws themselves. Eight years of incessant warfare hardly sufficed to subdue the untractable spirit of the Gauls. The fiercest tribes were those which lay in the north-east of the country, who passed under the general name of Pelgæ or Belgians, and extended from the Rhine to the Seine. These people caused Cæsar more trouble than all the other Gallic tribes; and when he at last reached the ocean which washes their shores, he could see from the country extending between the modern towns of Dunkirk and Dieppe, the outlines of that Britain which up to his time had continued to be the Terra incognita of the ancients. The sight of Britain from the French coast thrills to the heart of the modern native of this insular empire; and even the foreigner, who can travel from Paris to St. Petersburg or Constantinople without having to cross a mile's breadth of salt water, looks with interest upon the white cliffs of Britain, cut off as they are from the rest of civilized Europe by a mighty natural boundary, and sometimes lost to the sight in the fogs and tempests which are the danger and the protection of our island. It may then be easily conceived with what expansive feelings Julius Cæsar would look upon this new found land, opening for the first time to his eyes, and perhaps also to the eyes of all

who were then in his company. This was that land, of which poetry said so much and history so little: this was known to Cæsar as the fertile source from which the Phœnicians, the greatest commercial nation of antiquity, drew their chief stores of the most useful metals; and the bold imagination of the first Roman conqueror who ever saw this country, could hardly fail to anticipate the greatest advantages to himself and his commonwealth if he could subdue it by his arms. Cæsar could not be at a loss for information from living witnesses on the subject of Britain; for the Veneti, who were some of his most powerful enemies, were a maritime people, possessing many ships, in which they crossed over to the island[a], and individuals among them were no doubt ready to assist Cæsar, even though it was against their own allies. For a war with the Veneti was one of the last difficulties which Cæsar had to encounter, the year before he crossed over into Britain, and the preparations which they made against him were of a serious and formidable nature, as we find them recorded in the words of the general[b] himself; "They fortified their towns, brought in corn from the neighbouring countries, and collected as many vessels as they were able at Venetia, where it was likely that Cæsar would first come to an engagement. They invited the Osismii, Lexovii, Nannetes, Ambiliati, Morini, Diablintes, and Menapii[c] to aid them in the war, and *sent over for assistance from Britain*, which lies on the other side of the ocean over against them."

This confederacy however failed, as all others had failed, before the military genius of the general and the superior discipline and accoutrements of his soldiers.

[a] Cæsar. de B. G. iii. 8. [b] Ibid. iii. 9.

[c] See the map and index for the modern names of these tribes.

The ensuing year began with a campaign against the Germans, but the campaign produced little decisive, Cæsar remained only eighteen days on the eastern bank of the Rhine, and on his return commenced the series of movements which I shall now proceed to relate in his own words[d].

"The summer was now nearly over, but though from the northerly position of Gaul the winters are early in their approach, yet Cæsar determined to pass over into Britain; for he had noticed that in all his wars in Gaul, his enemies obtained assistance against him from that island, and though the season of the year was unfavourable for military proceedings, yet he thought it would be of service if he only visited the island, to reconnoitre the country, the character of its inhabitants, its ports and the most convenient places for landing an army. All these points had until then been almost entirely unknown even to the Gauls themselves; for no one but merchants ever went there, and even these knew nothing of it beyond the coast, and those parts which lie over against Gaul. With this view Cæsar assembled together merchants from all quarters, but with no benefit: for he could not learn from them either the extent of the island, the nature and number of nations which inhabited it, their military laws or civil institutions: nor could he ascertain the harbours in which a fleet of ships could best come to anchor. Before therefore he ran any risk, he sent Caius Volusenus in a war-galley to ascertain these particulars, giving him orders, as soon as he had made the necessary inquiries, to return to him with all possible speed. At the same time he led all his troops into the

[d] Cæs. de B. C. iv. 20—28. The summer of the year B. C. 55. is meant here.

country of the Morini, because the passage from thence into Britain was the shortest. To this point he ordered his fleet, which had been engaged the preceding summer against the Veneti, to converge from all quarters.

"Meanwhile news of his intentions was conveyed by the merchants to Britain, and several of the states, into which that island is divided, sent ambassadors to give hostages, and to submit to the government of the Roman people. Cæsar gave audience to these, and sent them home with liberal promises, and exhortations to adhere to the line of conduct which they had chosen. He sent also in their company Commius, whom he had made king over the vanquished Atrebates, a man whose integrity of character, talents, fidelity, and influence among the people in those parts, seemed likely to be of service to him. His instructions were to visit as many states as he could, to exhort them to enter into allegiance with the Roman people, and to assure them of his speedy arrival.

"Volusenus his emissary, meanwhile reconnoitered the country as far as he was able from on board his ship; for he did not venture to land and mix with the barbarians; and on the fifth day he returned to Cæsar, and reported what he had seen.

"Whilst Cæsar was delaying in these parts to get together his vessels, ambassadors came from most of the towns of the Morini, to make excuses for their former conduct; and, whilst they asked forgiveness for acts which a barbarous nation, ignorant of the Roman customs, had committed against the Roman people, they promised in future to do every thing that he should command them. This appeared to Cæsar to be a most fortunate occurrence; for he had no wish to

leave an enemy behind him, and the season of the year would not allow of his prosecuting the war against them, nor did he indeed think it desirable to suffer such a trifling matter to interfere with his design against Britain: wherefore he demanded of them a large number of hostages, and on their arrival received the whole nation into alliance. He then collected about eighty vessels of burden, which he considered quite enough to transport two legions; and distributed all his galleys among the quæstor, his lieutenants and præfects. Besides these, there were eighteen vessels of burden about eight miles off, which had been prevented by the wind from entering the harbour: these he distributed among the cavalry. The rest of his army he committed to Quintus Titurius Sabinus and Lucius Aurunculeius Cotta, his lieutenants, with orders to march against the Menapii, and those towns of the Morini*, which had not sent ambassadors to him. Lastly, he ordered Publius Sulpicius Rufus, his lieutenant, to occupy the harbour with such a force as he thought sufficient for the purpose.

"When every thing was settled, he took the opportunity of fine weather for putting to sea, and weighed anchor about the third watch of the night†, having previously sent on his cavalry to take ship at the distant post aforesaid, and to sail after him. This, however, was not done so promptly as he had expected, so that he himself with the advanced squadron arrived about ten o'clock on the coast of Britain, where he beheld all the hills covered with bodies of armed men. The nature of the country was such, and the hills by which the sea was bounded were so low, that the inhabitants,

* See Index and Map for the modern names of these tribes.

† Between twelve and three in the morning.

standing on high ground, could hurl their weapons down upon the shore. This place therefore did not furnish a good landing, and Cæsar remained at anchor till three o'clock in the afternoon, waiting for his other vessels. Meanwhile he called together his lieutenants and tribunes of the soldiers, and told them what information he had procured from Volusenus, and what mode of conduct he wished them to observe, warning them how necessary it was for them in battle, and especially in a naval battle, which allowed such sudden vicissitudes, to obey his orders with zeal and punctuality. He then dismissed them, and, taking advantage of a favourable wind and tide, gave the signal to weigh anchor, and running on about seven miles farther, brought his ships up on an open and level strand.

"But the barbarians had perceived this manœuvre of the Romans, and sent on their cavalry and war-chariots, of which they make great use in battle: the rest of their army also soon followed, and our troops were prevented from landing. This caused us great embarrassment, for the ships from their size required deep water, and the soldiers, strangers to the coast, having their hands and bodies oppressed with the load of their weapons and armour, had to leap out of the vessels, make good their footing among the waves, and fight with the enemy at the same time; whereas the Britons stood on dry ground, or, at all events, without advancing far into the water, enjoyed the free use of their limbs, and being well acquainted with the place, hurled their javelins at us boldly, and frightened our horses unused to such a scene. Our men were daunted, for they had never before fought in this way; nor did they shew the same alacrity and zeal, which in all their battles by land they had hitherto displayed.

"When Cæsar saw this, he directed his long vessels, which were less well known to the barbarians, and better adapted for manœuvering, to draw off from the vessels of burden, and row round upon the flanks of the enemy, and so check and repel them by stones, arrows, and other missiles from a distance. This movement did good service to our men; for the shape of these vessels, the motion of the oars, and the strange nature of the engines for throwing missiles, astonished the barbarians, and they withdrew a little. Our men still hesitated, principally on account of the depth of the water, when the standard-bearer of the tenth legion, invoking the gods that his legion might succeed in the attempt, exclaimed, "In with you," fellow-soldiers, unless you mean to abandon your eagle to the enemy: I will do my duty to the state, and to my general." Having said this, he jumped out of the vessel, and bore the standard in the direction of the enemy. Upon which, our men, mutually exhorting one another not to suffer such a disgrace, jumped all of them out of the vessel. The men in the other ships followed their example, and all together rushed upon the enemy.

"Both sides fought hard: but our men being unable to keep their ranks, or to stand firm and follow their standards, particularly as they ranged themselves indiscriminately, on leaving their vessels, under the first ensign they saw, toiled much, and were in great confusion. But the enemy, who knew the depth of the water, standing upon the shore, watched us as we left the ships individually, urged their horses against us, and annoyed us much. Some of our small parties they surrounded in numbers, whilst others of them on the flank discharged their weapons against our main body. Cæsar, seeing this, ordered the ships' boats

and small reconnoitering barks to be filled with soldiers, and sent them to aid those whom he saw in distress. As soon as our men set foot on dry ground, all the others followed them, and making a general attack upon the enemy, put them to flight, but were unable to follow them far, because the cavalry had been thrown out of their course, and were unable to make the island. But for this circumstance, Cæsar would have met with his usual good fortune.

"The defeated enemy no sooner halted after their flight, than they at once sent ambassadors to Cæsar to make peace, offering to give hostages, and to obey his orders. Together with these ambassadors, came Commius the Atrebatian, who, as we have already stated, had been sent by Cæsar into Britain to negociate. He had landed on the island, and was in the capacity of ambassador delivering the orders of his commander, when the natives seized him, and put him in chains; but now, after the battle, they sent him back to solicit peace, throwing all the blame of the matter upon the multitude, and begging Cæsar to forgive their imprudence. Cæsar complained that though they had formerly, without being asked, sent ambassadors to him on the continent to solicit peace, they now made war against him for no provocation: their imprudence however he forgave, and demanded hostages of them. Upon which they gave him some hostages on the spot, and said that in a few days they would give him the others, whom they had to fetch from a distance. Meanwhile they sent their men away to their homes, whilst the chiefs came together from all quarters, and commended themselves and their several states to Cæsar's protection.

"Peace being thus confirmed, on the fourth day after his arrival in Britain, the eighteen ships, which we

before mentioned, carrying the cavalry, put to sea from the upper port with a gentle wind. They had already neared the coast of Britain, and were seen from the camp, when there suddenly arose so violent a storm, that they were unable to maintain their course. Some of them were driven back to the port, which they had quitted; others were cast upon the lower part of the island, off towards the west, with great danger of being lost: here however they came to an anchor, but finding that the ships filled with water, and were unable to ride, they were obliged during the stormy night which ensued to weigh again, and make for the mainland.

"The same night was the full moon, which causes the tides of the ocean to be at their highest: but our men were unacquainted with this fact. Thus at one and the same time the long vessels, which Cæsar had used for transporting his army, and which he had drawn up on dry ground, were filled with the tide; and the vessels of burden, which had been secured at anchor, were shattered by the storm, nor had we power to minister to their wants, or to help them in their distress. Several of the ships were broken to pieces: the others, having lost their ropes, anchors, and other tackle, were rendered unserviceable; and, as the inevitable result, the whole army was in great dismay: for they had no other ships to carry them back, and there was nothing at hand with which the old ones could be repaired; besides which, as all expected that they should winter in Gaul, they had not provided any corn for passing the winter here.

"As soon as this state of things was known, the British chiefs, who after the battle had come together to receive Cæsar's orders, held a council among themselves, and seeing that the Romans had neither cavalry,

ships, nor provisions, and only a small army and a thin camp, for Cæsar had brought over his legions without the usual baggage and material, determined to renew the war, and by cutting off our communication and provisions, to await the approach of winter; and they felt confident, that if they could defeat them, or prevent them from returning, no foreign enemy would ever again set foot in Britain.

"Wherefore they again held secret communication together, and began gradually to leave the camp, and to assemble their men together privately from the fields. But Cæsar, though he as yet did not notice these proceedings, nevertheless judging by the calamity which had happened to the ships, and because they were slow to bring in the rest of the hostages, had suspicions of what was about to happen. He therefore made provision for every contingency: for he daily procured fresh grain from the country, and destroying the ships which had suffered most, used the brass and other materials to refit the others, and whatever else was wanted for these purposes, he sent for from the mainland. Thus, with the zealous cooperation of the soldiers, he managed to refit all his ships with the loss of twelve only.

"Whilst these things were going on, it happened that the seventh legion had been sent out, according to custom, to forage. There was at that time no suspicion of the war being renewed, for some of the inhabitants were remaining in their fields, and others were coming and going in the camp, when on a sudden, the guard at the gate reported that they saw a cloud of dust, greater than was usual, in the same direction as the legion had departed. Cæsar suspecting the truth, that the barbarians had taken some new counsel,

proceeded towards the spot with the cohorts on guard, giving orders that these should be replaced by two others, and that all the rest should arm and follow him immediately. When he was at some distance from the camp, he saw his men hard pressed by the enemy, and with great difficulty maintaining their ground, whilst the legion was crowded together, and weapons pouring in on them from all sides. For every other part of the country had been stripped of its corn, and as this part alone remained untouched, the barbarians, suspecting that our men would come in this direction, had lain in wait for them by night in the woods; and when they had cast aside their arms, and separated to mow the corn, the Britons suddenly attacked them, slew some few of them, and created great confusion among the others, before they could succeed in forming their ranks: at the same time they had entirely surrounded them with their cavalry and chariots.

"The mode of fighting from these war-chariots is peculiar: first they gallop about in all directions, throwing their javelins, and thus by the alarm which the horses create and the noise of the wheels they in general confuse the ranks of their enemies: after which, when they have got in among the troops of cavalry, they leap down from their chariots and fight on foot. The drivers meanwhile gradually draw off from the battle, and place the chariots in such a manner, that if the warriors are pressed hard by the number of the enemy, they may withdraw without difficulty to their own army. Thus in battle they unite the rapid movements of cavalry and the stability of infantry, and by their daily habit of exercise they have acquired such skill, that in steep and precipitous ground they will stop their horses at speed, turn and guide them at

will, run along the pole, stand on the yoke, and run back again at full speed into the chariot.

"Thus our soldiers were confounded at this extraordinary way of fighting, when Cæsar most opportunely came to their assistance. At his coming the enemy ceased to attack, and our troops recovered from their panic. Upon which, Cæsar deeming it inexpedient to provoke the enemy to battle, remained where he was, and after a short interval, led back his legions to their camp. Whilst this was passing, and our men had enough to occupy them, those who had halted in the fields, took their departure. For several days in succession there were violent storms, which both detained our men in the camp, and prevented the enemy from attacking them. Meanwhile the barbarians sent messengers in every quarter with information of the scanty number of our soldiers, and enlarging on the rich booty which would fall to them, and the certainty of future liberty, if they could expel the Romans from the camp. By these means they assembled a large army of foot and horse, and advanced to attack the camp.

"Cæsar saw that, if the enemy should be repelled, they would by their rapidity soon be out of danger, as on former occasions; nevertheless, having got about thirty cavalry, whom Commius the Atrebatian, before mentioned, had brought over with him, he drew up his legions in line before the camp. The battle began, and the enemy, unable for any length of time to sustain the attack of our men, turned their backs and fled. The Romans pursued them as far as their speed and strength would allow, and slew several of them: after which they destroyed and burnt every thing around, and withdrew to their camp.

"The same day the enemy sent ambassadors to Cæsar to ask peace. Cæsar doubled the number of hostages that he before had imposed on them, and told them to bring them over to him on the continent: for the equinox was now at hand, and as his ships were not sound, he did not like to expose himself to danger from storms on his return. He therefore availed himself of the first favourable weather, and putting to sea a little after midnight with all his ships, reached the mainland in safety: but two of the vessels of burden were unable to make the same port as the others, and came to land a short distance lower down.

"About three hundred soldiers were landed out of these vessels, and as they were on their way to the camp, the Morini, whom Cæsar on his departure for Britain had left in tranquillity, excited by the prospect of plunder, came upon them with a small number of men at first, and told them, if they wished to preserve their lives, to lay down their arms. But they, forming a circle, began to defend themselves, when at the first noise about five thousand men came together. News of this being brought to Cæsar, he sent all his cavalry from the camp to help them. Meanwhile our soldiers sustained the attack of the enemy, and fought bravely for more than four hours. They lost but few of their own men, and slew many of the barbarians. When the cavalry came in sight, the enemy fled, throwing away their arms, and a large number of them were slain.

"The next day Cæsar sent Titus Labienus his lieutenant, with the legions he had brought from Britain, against the Morini, who had committed this act of rebellion. But the marshes, to which they had fled for refuge the year before, were now dried up, and so having no place to retreat to, they almost all fell into

the hands of Labienus. But the lieutenants, Quintus Titurius and Lucius Cotta, who had led the legions into the territory of the Menapii, devastated the whole country, cut the corn, and burnt the houses, for the Menapii themselves had fled to the fastnesses of the woods. They then rejoined Cæsar, who fixed all his legions for the winter in Belgium. Only two of the British states sent hostages to him here; the rest neglected to do so. The senate being informed of these exploits by a letter from Cæsar, decreed public thanksgivings for the space of twenty days."

CHAP. III.

CÆSAR'S SECOND INVASION.

THE winter of the year Before Christ 55 was spent in inactivity, and the Britons perhaps supposed that Cæsar had abandoned his attempts on their island. But the intentions of that general had received no change. He had hardly returned from Britain, before he hastened to Italy to look after the political interests of himself and his party; but he left instructions to make every possible preparation for repeating his invasion of Britain in the spring. "Before his departure for Italy," (we again follow his own narrative,) "he commanded his lieutenants, who were left in charge of the legions, to occupy the winter in building as many new vessels as possible, and refitting the old ones. At the same time he gave them instructions as to their form and make. To insure rapidity in loading, and greater facility of drawing them ashore, they were to be constructed somewhat lower than those which we use in our own seas[a], and the more so, inasmuch as he had noticed that on account of the frequent changes of the tide, the waves were not of the same magnitude as with us. On the other hand, for the convenience of transporting a large cargo and carrying horses, he ordered

[a] The Mediterranean sea with its various bays and gulfs.

them to be made wider than is usual elsewhere. All these vessels were to be impelled by oars, and for that purpose it is desirable that they should be low. He next gave orders to import from Spain all the necessary articles for fitting out the fleet: and when he had attended all the meetings and settled affairs in Gallia Citerior, he set out for Illyricum, because he had received information that the Pirustæ were invading and devastating the neighbouring districts of the Roman province. On his arrival, he imposed on the states a levy of soldiers, and ordered these to meet at a certain place. The Pirustæ, hearing this, sent ambassadors to inform him that those acts of aggression had taken place without any public authority, and that they were ready to give him any satisfaction in their power for the injury which had been committed. Cæsar, having heard what they had to say, required of them to give hostages, and to bring them on a certain day, failing to do which they would expose themselves to his immediate vengeance. The hostages were brought punctually on the day appointed, and Cæsar then sent arbitrators to the different states to estimate the damage, and fix the compensation which they were to make.

" After these meetings were ended, Cæsar returned into Gallia Citerior, and from thence set off to join the army. Here he went round to all their winter-quarters, and such had been the exertions of his soldiers, that, though in want of almost every thing, they had got together about five hundred vessels of the kind we before mentioned, together with twenty-eight long vessels, and all were so far ready, that in a few days they might be launched. He gave due praise both to the soldiers and to their officers, and having pointed

out what they were to do, told them to meet him at Portus Itius, at which port he had perceived it was best to embark for Britain, the voyage thither from the mainland being about thirty miles[b]. For this purpose he left as many soldiers as the service seemed to require, and himself with four light legions and eight hundred cavalry marched into the territory of the Treviri, because these people had neither come to meet him at the congress, nor submitted to his authority, and it was reported moreover that they were trying to stir up the Germans beyond the Rhine to disaffection.

" This state possesses a larger force of cavalry than any other in Gaul, besides numerous infantry, and, as we have shewn above, borders on the Rhine. For the sovereignty of this state there were two competitors, Indutiomarus and Cingetorix, the latter of whom no sooner heard of Cæsar's arrival with the legions, than he appeared in the camp, and offered his services and those of his followers to Cæsar, promising never to desert him: moreover he told him what was passing among the Treviri. Indutiomarus, on the other hand, began to levy forces both foot and horse, and having placed all those, who, on account of their age, could not take arms, in the great forest of Ardennes, which extends through the middle of the Treviri from the river Rhine to the frontiers of the Remi; himself began to turn his attention to war. But some of the nobles of that state, induced by their friendship with Cingetorix, and alarmed by the arrival of our troops, came to Cæsar, and seeing it impossible to make terms for the whole commonwealth, began to negociate for themselves. Indutiomarus, fearing lest his troops should desert him, sent ambassadors to Cæsar with an

[b] About twenty-two miles according to the English standard.

excuse for not leaving his men and waiting in person on the general. He pleaded that he wished to keep the state to its duty, lest, if all the nobles should leave it, the common people might commit some act of folly. As things were, the state was in his hands, and if Cæsar would allow him, he would visit his camp, and confide in his honour for the safety both of himself and his country.

"It was evident to Cæsar what was the motive of this message, and why the plans of Indutiomarus had been baffled; yet, as he had no wish to spend the summer among the Treviri, and every thing was now ready for the British war, he ordered Indutiomarus to wait on him with two hundred hostages. These were duly brought to him, and amongst them he had particularly specified his son and all his nearest kinsmen. Then after having consoled Indutiomarus, and exhorted him to be faithful to his engagements, he assembled all the nobles of the Treviri, and reconciled them one by one to Cingetorix, and in doing this he not only felt that he was sanctioned by the man's merit, but moreover saw how desirable it was that one, whose zeal had been so conspicuous towards himself, should stand well in the eyes of his countrymen. Indutiomarus, however, was much vexed, considering his own influence thereby diminished; and his enmity towards us, which before was sufficiently evident, was kindled more than ever by this new indignity.

"After these things were settled, Cæsar marched with the legions to Portus Itius. There he was informed that sixty vessels, which had been built among the Belgæ[c], had been driven back by a storm, and returned to the port from which they had started: the others

[c] Some copies of Cæsar's commentaries read "the Meldi" in this place.

he found ready for sailing, and with all the necessary stores on board. There had also arrived cavalry from the whole of Gaul, four thousand in number, and the chiefs of all the states: some of these, on whose fidelity he could rely, he had determined to leave in Gaul, but he resolved to take the others with him as hostages; for he feared a disturbance in Gaul, during his absence.

"Amongst others, there was Dumnorix the Æduan, of whom we have elsewhere made mention. This man in particular Cæsar determined to keep near himself, for he knew him to be eager for a revolution, ambitious of power, having moreover a mind of an elevated character, and possessed of much influence among the Gauls. Dumnorix had once said in an assembly of the Ædui, that Cæsar had offered him the sovereignty of his own country; and this displeased the Ædui, though they did not dare send ambassadors to Cæsar to make objections to the measure, or to deprecate its being put in execution. Cæsar was informed of this by certain persons at whose houses he had been entertained, and therefore determined to carry this man with him to Britain. At first Dumnorix entreated most earnestly that he might be allowed to remain in Gaul; partly alleging his inexperience and dread of the sea, and partly that he was prevented by religious scruples. When he found that his request was rigidly refused, and that there remained no hope of its being granted, he addressed himself to the Gallic chiefs, and calling them aside exhorted them not to leave the continent, for that it was Cæsar's plan to strip Gaul of all her nobility; and, whereas at home he would not venture to put them to death, yet he might safely do so when he had them in Britain: to this he added exhortations

that they should be loyal to their country, and unite one and all to enforce such measures as should tend to the common good.

"All this being repeated to Cæsar, he determined to take precautions that himself and the state might not suffer by it. He therefore remained about five and twenty days where he was, because the north wind, which generally blows in those parts, impeded his voyage, and he did his utmost to keep Dumnorix within the bounds of duty, and at the same time to discover all his plans. At length, when he found the weather favourable, he ordered both cavalry and infantry to embark. But the zeal of all was now damped, and Dumnorix with his cavalry, leaving the camp without Cæsar's knowledge, commenced their march homeward. News of this being brought to Cæsar, he postponed his departure and every thing connected with it, and sent the greater part of the cavalry to pursue him and bring him back, or to kill him if he resisted: for he saw that in his own absence it would be folly to expect much from one who disobeyed orders even in his very presence. Dumnorix being overtaken, chose to resist, and repeatedly cried out that he was a free man, and member of a free state. The troops, according to orders, surrounded and slew him: the cavalry to a man returned to Cæsar.

"After this, Labienus was left with three legions and two thousand cavalry, to defend the ports and manage the commissariat department. He was also instructed to keep an eye on what was passing in Gaul, and act accordingly. Cæsar himself, with five legions and the same number of cavalry as he left on the continent, put to sea at sun-set, with a gentle gale from the west, but about midnight the wind fell, and being unable to

maintain his course, he found himself carried down by the tide, and in the morning saw Britain behind him off to the left. When the tide turned, the seamen took to their oars, and tried to make that part of the island, which the preceding summer he had found so well adapted for landing. The zeal of his men in seconding his plans cannot be too highly commended, for by the most unremitting exertions they rowed along their transports and heavy vessels, so as to keep company with the long ships of war. All the fleet reached Britain about noon, and not a single enemy was to be seen; though, as Cæsar afterwards learnt from the prisoners, a large number of men had been collected, but the multitude of our ships, which with the old vessels and private craft that individuals had taken for their own advantage, amounted altogether to more than eight hundred, so frightened them, that they left the shore, and retired to the higher parts of the country.

"Cæsar, having landed his army, and chosen a proper place for his camp, was informed by some prisoners where the enemy were; and having left ten cohorts and three hundred horse near the sea, to guard the ships, about the third watch of the night he set out to find them. In the mean time he had no apprehensions about his fleet, because he left the ships at anchor on a smooth and open coast, under the charge of Quintus Atrius. After advancing by night about twelve miles, he got sight of the enemy, who came down to the river[d] to meet him with their cavalry and chariots, and attempted from elevated ground to begin the battle, and repel our troops. But

[d] This must have been the river Stour, which is the only considerable stream in that part of the country.

our horse soon drove them back, and they took refuge in the woods, where they had a place singularly strong both by nature and art, and which to all appearances had been constructed by them as a stronghold during their civil wars; for every approach to it was effectually blocked up by felled trees. Some few of their troops however continued to skirmish from the woods, and prevented our men from entering their fortress. But the soldiers of the seventh legion locked their shields together so as to form what is called the testudo, and mounting over a mound thrown up against the defences, took the place, and expelled the Britons from the woods, without receiving much loss themselves. Cæsar would not let them pursue the fugitives far, because, as he was a stranger to the country, and the day was now advanced, he wished to occupy the remaining part of it in fortifying his camp.

"The next morning he divided his legionaries and cavalry into three bodies, and sent them in pursuit of the fugitives: but they had not gone far, and indeed the rearmost of them were still in sight, when some horsemen came from Quintus Atrius, and told Cæsar that during the past night a severe storm had arisen, and driven almost all his vessels on shore: neither ropes nor anchors remained, and both sailors and pilots were utterly unable to make head against it, so that by the ships dashing one against another, very great damage had been occasioned.

"On hearing this news, Cæsar sent after the cavalry, and ordered them to desist from the pursuit; whilst himself returned to the ships, where he witnessed the truth of what the messengers had communicated. About four of the ships appeared to be beyond hope, but the rest admitted of being repaired, though not

without much trouble. He therefore draughted off workmen from the legions, and sent for others from the mainland. At the same time he wrote to Labienus, directing him to supply as many ships as possible for the use of the legions. He now resolved, notwithstanding the difficulty of the task, to haul up all his ships, and enclose them in the same line of fortification as the camp. This labour occupied about ten days, and the work was not intermitted even during the night. The vessels were thus drawn up, and a camp strongly fortified; after which, leaving the same troops as before to guard the fleet, he again set out on the expedition which he had before abandoned. On arriving at the same place, he found that a much larger British force was now collected, the supreme command of which had by general consent been given to Cassibellaunus[e], whose territories were separated from the maritime districts by a river called the Thames, about eighty miles from the sea. This prince had in past times been engaged in continual wars with the other states, but on our arrival the Britons were alarmed, and made him commander in chief both civil and military over the whole nation.

"The inhabitants of the interior of Britain are said by tradition to be the indigenous race; but the sea-coasts are inhabited by Belgians[f], who had settled there

[e] This is probably the Roman form of the British name Caswallon.

[f] It is almost impossible at this distance of time to ascertain how far the Belgian settlements extended inland in Britain; though there are strong reasons for supposing that they covered a large portion of the south of England. The narrative of Cæsar would lead us to infer, that the Britons with whom he came in contact were not of two distinct races. He must therefore, as is evident from his own account, have fought against the Belgian settlers, and have had nothing to do with the more ancient Celtic population. The Belgæ

for purposes either of war or plunder. The names of their towns are in general the same as those from which they came, when in the course of their wars they first settled here, and began to cultivate the land. The number of inhabitants is very great, and also of buildings, which are similar to those of the Gauls: they have also great abundance of cattle. For money they use talleys of brass or iron, reduced to a certain standard-weight. Whitelead is found in the midland districts, and iron on the sea-coasts; but it is not very abundant; the brass which they use is imported from other countries. They have building materials of every kind, as in Gaul, except beech and fir. They hold it unlawful to eat hares, fowls, or geese; but they rear these animals for their pleasure and amusement. The country is milder than in Gaul, the cold being not so acute.

"The shape of the island is triangular; one of its sides is that opposite Gaul. Of this side one extremity is in Kent, where nearly all the ships from

were at that time, as they are at present, a busy commercial people, and had spread, even in the time of Cæsar, as far as the Seine towards the west in France. If this view of the extent of the Belgian settlements in Britain be correct, it removes a great deal of the difficulty which surrounds the story of the Britons having been exterminated in after ages by the Saxons. It is not likely that military invaders like the Saxons would either slay all the peasants of the country, or drive them into Wales; and it is morally certain that so poor a country as Wales would suffer from famine both then and now from the sudden influx of a hundred thousand foreigners. The Saxons would be more likely to retain the original British population as servants to till their grounds, and, if that population were of Belgian or German descent, as were the Saxons themselves, their amalgamation with a kindred race would be speedy and complete. But it is as yet uncertain how far the Celts themselves were originally of German descent also.

Gaul come to land. This end looks towards the east; the lower extremity extends towards the south. The length of this coast is about five hundred miles. Another of the sides of Britain looks towards Spain and the west: Ireland lies in the same direction: this island is estimated to be about half the size of Britain, and is about the same distance from it as Gaul. Halfway between the two is an island called Mona[g]; there are thought to be several other small islands, about which some authors have written, that in winter there is continual darkness for thirty days together. We could not obtain any information on these points by all our enquiries, though we discovered that the nights are shorter than on the mainland. The length of the second side of Britain is reputed to be seven hundred miles. The third side faces the north, and has no other land over against it, but the extremity of this side looks mostly towards Germany: it is supposed to be eight hundred miles in length. Thus the whole island is two thousand miles in circuit.

"Of all the Britons, the Kentish men are the most civilized. Kent is entirely a maritime county, and its inhabitants in their manners resemble the Gauls. The inhabitants of the interior do not sow grain, but live on milk and flesh, and clothe themselves in skins. All the Britons stain themselves with woad, which produces a blue colour; and this makes them appear more terrible in battle. They wear their hair long, and shave every other part of their body except the head and upper lip. Ten or twelve of them combine

[g] As Anglesey and Man are both expressed by the same Latin name, Mona, there is great confusion between these two islands: the latter would seem to be intended in this passage.

together, and have their wives in common: this is generally done between brothers, or between fathers and sons; but their children are considered to belong to him who married the woman in the first instance.

"The enemy's cavalry and chariots engaged most furiously with our cavalry on their march; but our men were every where superior, and finally drove them to the hills and woods: though, when they had slain several of them, they followed too eagerly, and lost some of their own body. The enemy now suffered some time to elapse, which our men occupied in fortifying their camp; but whilst they were busily engaged in this, the Britons suddenly burst from the woods, and taking them by surprise, fell with fury on the outposts. Cæsar sent two cohorts to relieve them, and as they were drawn up with a very little interval between them, the enemy, who astonished our men by their novel mode of fighting, burst furiously through the midst, and regained their position in safety. On this day we lost the tribune Quintus Laberius Durus. At last, more cohorts came up, and the enemy were repulsed.

"In all these skirmishes, so immediately under our eyes, and close to the camp, it was evident that the weight of our men's armour prevented them from pursuing the enemy when they retreated, or advancing far from their own colours. In short, their accoutrements were ill adapted against such an enemy as they now had to deal with; and the cavalry in particular incurred great risk on the field of battle; for the Britons would often make a feigned retreat, and allure them to separate from the legions, after which, they would leap from their chariots, and take the cavalry at a disadvantage. For a body of cavalry is ill matched

against an enemy that retreats and advances, and in both cases incurs great danger. Add to this, that the Britons never advanced in one body, but fought in small numbers, and at intervals between their stations, so that one squadron relieved another, and our men, who had been contending against those who were exhausted, suddenly found themselves engaged with a fresh body who had taken their places.

"The next day the enemy took up a position on the hills at some distance from the camp, and only appeared a few at a time, whilst they were also less disposed to attack our cavalry than they had been the day before. About noon Cæsar sent out Caius Trebonius, the lieutenant, with three legions and all the cavalry to forage; upon which the enemy assembled from all sides, and surrounded the foragers, who were unable to leave their colours, or separate from the legions. Our men now made a general attack upon them, and put them to flight, and pursued them without stopping, as long as the legions kept in sight, and gave the cavalry confidence of support, whilst they drove the Britons before them. In this manner they did not allow them time to rally, or halt, or leap from their chariots, according to their usual custom. In consequence of this defeat, the British reinforcements, which had come up in all directions, again disbanded, and from that time the enemy never again came to a general engagement.

"Cæsar now, knowing their intentions, led his army towards the Thames, in order to invade the territories of Cassivellaunus. This river could only be passed on foot in one place[h], and that with difficulty. When

[h] This is supposed to be Cowey Stakes, near Chertsey.

he arrived on its banks, he perceived a large force drawn up on the other side to oppose him; the bank, moreover, was planted with sharp stakes, and others of the same kind were fixed in the river under the water. This intelligence Cæsar gained from the prisoners and deserters. He accordingly sent the cavalry in advance, and brought up the infantry immediately in their rear. So great were the zeal and impetuosity of the soldiers, that whilst their heads alone appeared above the water, the enemy, unable to sustain their attack, abandoned the bank, and fled with precipitation.

"Cassivellaunus, as we have before observed, abandoned all idea of fighting, and dismissed the greater part of his forces, retaining only about four thousand men in chariots. With these he watched our march, and retiring out of our way, lay in wait for us among the woods and difficult passes. Meanwhile he cleared the whole country, through which our road lay, of both men and cattle; and when our foragers went out to get provisions and ravage the country, his knowledge of the ways enabled him to assail them with all his chariots: this caused much danger to our cavalry, and prevented them going far from the main body. Cæsar's only resource was to forbid distant excursions, and to confine his attention to annoying the enemy by such depredations and ravages, as the legionaries could, with much difficulty, accomplish in the course of their march.

"Meanwhile the Trinovantes, the principal state in that part of the island, send ambassadors to Cæsar, with offers of surrender and submission. It was from this very state that the young man Mandrubatius had come to Cæsar in Gaul, wishing to make an alliance with him: his father, Imanuentius, had been king of

the Trinovantes, and had been put to death by Cassivellaunus: his son, however, escaped the same fate by flight. The conditions, on which they now offered submission to Cæsar, were, that he should espouse the cause of Mandrubatius against Cassivellaunus, and restore him to the sovereignty over his countrymen. Cæsar required of them to give forty hostages, and supply his army with corn. He then sent Mandrubatius to them, and they on their part lost no time in fulfilling their part of the treaty.

"The Trinovantes being thus protected, and orders given to the soldiers to do them no injury, the Cenimagni, Segontiaci, Ancalites, Bibroci, and Cassi, sent ambassadors, and made submission. Cæsar was informed by these, that the town of Cassivellaunus[1] was not far off, surrounded by woods and marshes, and occupied by a large number of men and cattle. The Britons call by the name of town, a place in the fastnesses of the woods, surrounded by a mound and trench, and calculated to afford them a retreat and protection from a hostile invasion. Cæsar immediately marched to this place, which he found extremely strong, both by nature and art; however, he assailed it at once in two different quarters. The enemy stood their ground for a time, but at length yielded to the onset of our men, and abandoned the town on the opposite side. A great number of cattle were found there, and many of the enemy were slain or taken prisoners in the pursuit.

"Whilst these things were passing, Cassivellaunus marched into Kent, which, as we said, lies along the sea-coast, and sent orders to the four kings of that country, Cingetorix, Carvilius, Taximagulus, and Se-

[1] Supposed to be St. Alban's, near the more ancient Verulam.

gonax, to assemble all their forces, and attack Cæsar's naval camp by surprise. But when the enemy arrived at the camp, our men made a sally, and having slain many of them, returned safely within their intrenchments, carrying with them a young chief, Lugotorix, as a prisoner. When Cassivellaunus was informed of the result of this battle, he was dispirited by his many losses, and seeing his lands laid waste, and, above all, his subjects beginning to be disaffected, he made a communication to Cæsar through Commius the Atrebatian, asking for peace. Now Cæsar had determined to winter on the continent, lest there might be any sudden tumults in Gaul, and as he saw there would be no great difficulty in wasting what little summer still remained, he demanded hostages of Cassivellaunus, and fixed a tribute for the Britons to pay every year to the Roman people: moreover, he forbade Cassivellaunus to make war on Mandubratius or the Trinovantes.

"After this, the British hostages were delivered, and Cæsar led his army back to the sea, where he found his ships refitted. But when they were all launched, the large number of prisoners, and the loss of some of his ships by the storm, led him to believe it would be better to divide the whole into two parts, and cross the sea twice." But the equinox was at hand, and the Romans, never very bold sailors, were apprehensive of danger if they encountered the gales, which set in at that period of the year. So the army was crowded together, as well as might be, into their ships, and putting to sea about nine o'clock in the evening, arrived early the next morning in Gaul, without injury to any of their ships, or the loss of a single man."

CHAP. IV.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH—HIS FABULOUS HISTORY OF BRITAIN BEFORE THE TIME OF CÆSAR—HIS ACCOUNT OF CÆSAR'S INVASION.

THE narrative contained in the last chapter bears such an appearance of simplicity and truth, that the most implicit confidence may be placed in the veracity of the writer. It is evident from Cæsar's own words that he encountered an opposition from the Britons which he had not by any means expected, and the perseverance displayed by his enemies in attacking him is calculated to give us an enlarged idea of their condition as social beings. Slaves do not fight with that determination which characterizes the free citizens: at the first frown of fortune they turn their backs upon their foes, for defeat brings no worse evil than a change of masters. But the Britons waded into the water to repulse the invader from their island, and when by superior address he had effected a landing, they hesitated not to throw their naked bodies in desperate conflict upon the spears and panoply of the Romans. That Cæsar's views of conquest were baffled, is clear from his own recital; but later writers have taken advantage of this admission, and have represented him as having been entirely defeated, and pursued by the victorious Britons into Gaul. This

fable appears to derive its origin, or at least its propagation, from the work of Geoffrey of Monmouth, a writer and Bishop of the early part of the twelfth century, and as it professes to be a translation from an ancient British author, it will not be out of place to introduce here those parts which relate to the invasion of Julius Cæsar. The professed nature of the book will be best understood from the Preface, which is as follows.

"In turning over many and various subjects in my mind, I happened to meet with a history of the kings of Britain; and thought it singular, that besides the accounts which Gildas and Bede have given us in their plain and simple writings, I could find no notice of the kings who inhabited Britain before the Christian era, nor of Arthur and many others who succeeded after Christ; though their deeds are certainly worthy to be handed down to all posterity, and many people have stored them up in their memories, and take great delight in making them the subjects of their discourse. Such was the nature and course of my deliberations, when Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford, a man deeply learned in oratory and foreign history, put into my hands a very old book in the British tongue, which set forth in order and in an elegant language the acts of all the British Kings from Brutus, the first of them, down to Cadwallader the son of Cadwallo. At his request therefore, content with my own homely and unadorned style of language, without attempting to gather flowers from my neighbour's garden, I have endeavoured to translate the aforesaid book into the Latin tongue. For, if I had filled my page with big-sounding words, I should have disgusted my readers, who would have had to bestow

their attention on finding out my meaning, rather than on the historical facts which I described. I pray you therefore, Robert Duke of Gloucester, to patronize my work, that under your guidance and monitorship it may be carefully corrected, so that it may not seem to be derived from the humble stream which Geoffrey of Monmouth's poor talents can supply, but to be seasoned with the wit of your genius, and be received as the work of him who has the illustrious King Henry for his father, who has been educated in philosophy and in every liberal art; him, whose native worth has made him the commander of our armies, and in whom Britain congratulates herself, that in these our times her Henry is again alive!"

To this preface, from which it is evident that the author professes to have translated his work from a much earlier original, is subjoined a slight account of Britain, its fertility and products, together with other particulars apparently copied from the Roman historians, and from the Ecclesiastical History of Venerable Bede. The author then proceeds to inform us, that Brutus, the grandson of Æneas and son of Ascanius, having had the misfortune to kill his father, fled from Italy his country, and after long wanderings arrived on the shores of Britain, where he possessed himself of the sovereignty of the island, built Trinovantum [New-Troy], now London, and bestowed the Duchy of Cornwall on one of his followers Corineus, from whom it received its name.

Of this legend it is sufficient to say, that, if the story of Brutus is true, all ancient history, as commonly received, is fabulous: the accounts which all the Grecian and Roman writers have handed down to us must be regarded as false and worthless; for they are entirely

at variance with the history of the Trojan Brutus. The nature of the case also is such as not to admit the probability of Britain having been colonized from Troy. After the destruction of that city, the various chiefs who took to flight from its burning roofs, would naturally seek the nearest place of refuge, with no other case than not to fall in with cruising squadrons of the victorious Greeks. Hence, whilst no settlement of Trojans took place in Greece itself, we find every other part of the Mediterranean visited, or touched at, by the fugitives from Troy. The voyage of Æneas is a matter of history and of poetry founded upon fact; in addition to which, Antenor settled in Italy, and Acestes in Sicily: but there is not the slightest hint in the classic writers of any chieftain having passed beyond the pillars of Hercules, either directly from Troy, or in the age immediately succeeding; a voyage, which, from the circumstances of the fugitives, was unnecessary, and from its difficulty almost impossible.

The narrative of Geoffrey enumerates a series of sixty-seven kings, from Brutus the founder to Cassibellaun, whose resistance to the arms of Cæsar is not only recorded in authentic history, but recorded in terms creditable to our brave ancestors, and their bold but unsuccessful leader[a]. Of these sovereigns, Lud

[a] The names of these sovereigns are as follows: 1 Brutus, 2 Locrin, 3 Guendolæna, 4 Maddan, 5 Mempricius, 6 Ebrauc, 7 Brutus II, 8 Leil, 9 Hudibras, 10 Bladud, 11 Leir, 12 Gonorilla, 13 Cunedagius, 14 Rivallo, 15 Gurgustius, 16 Sisilius, 17 Jago, 18 Kinmarcus, 19 Gorbogudo, 20 Dunwallo Molmutius, 21 Belinus, 22 Gurgiunt Brabtruc, 23 Guithelin, 24 Sisillius, 25 Kimarus, 26 Danius, 27 Morvid, 28 Gorbonian, 29 Arthgallo, 30 Elidure, 31 Vigenius, 32 Peredure, 33 Gorbonian's son, 34 Margan, 35 Enniaunus, 36 Idwallo, 37 Runno, 38 Geruntius, 39 Catellus, 40 Coillus, 41 Porrex, 42 Cherin, 43 Fulgenius, 44 Eldadus, 45 Andragius, 46 Urianus,

and Leir figure in the pages of romance, and have obtained a name from the pen and the genius of the immortal Shakspere; nor is it to be believed that the rest of this long line of monarchs exist any where else than in the imagination of him who first catalogued them. But the exploits of Cassibellaun[b], as related in the fabulous British legend, require a passing notice. According to the writer, Cæsar, before setting out for Britain, despatched a letter to Cassibellaunus, claiming relationship on the ground of their common descent from Troy, and demanding that the Britons, as the less civilized branch, should yield submission to the more advanced and powerful Romans. To this demand Cassibellaunus is represented to have replied, that their relationship ought to unite the two nations in a bond of friendship and equal rights, and not be made the basis of subjection for the one, or preeminence for the other; that the Britons were content with the liberty which they had so long enjoyed, and would maintain it against all attempts to infringe it. These declarations of Cassibellaunus are stated to have been well substantiated by the result, for he is said to have met Cæsar at the water's edge, and to have driven him in disgrace back to Gaul. Nennius, brother of Cassibellaunus, is made to engage in single combat with the commander in chief of the invaders, who almost falls a victim to his

47 Eliud, 48 Cledaucus, 49 Cletonus, 50 Gurgintius, 51 Merianus, 52 Bleduno, 53 Cap, 54 Oenus, 55 Sisillius, 56 Blegabred, 57 Arthmail, 58 Eldol, 59 Redion, 60 Rederchius, 61 Samuilpenissel, 62 Pir, 63 Capoir, 64 Cligueillus, 65 Heli, 66 Lud, 67 Cassibellaun.

[b] Camden supposes Cassibellaunus to be more properly written Cassibelinus, and derives it from "Cassi," a British tribe, and "Belinus," a British idol: but the orthography of this and similar names varies so much, as to make it absolutely impossible to speak decisively of their etymology.

fury, though Nennius afterwards died of the wounds which he had received. In the account of Cæsar's second invasion, the Roman ships are described as having sailed up the Thames, until they arrived at the place where the river had been planted with stakes; here the fleet, striking against these unexpected obstacles, was thrown into confusion, and much damaged: the British troops rushed upon the enemy, who again fled in dismay to the coasts of Gaul; nor was it until they had a third time crossed the sea, invited by one Androgeus, the rival of Cassibellaunus, that Cæsar, after a severe campaign, reduced the refractory island chieftain to submission.

This narrative, which was until the sixteenth century generally received for authentic history, is now by common consent numbered among the fabulous legends with which all nations have endeavoured to ornament their early history. Mankind collectively and individually are ambitious of a long ancestry: the pride of the human intellect cannot content itself with the meanness which generally belongs to the origin of the most noble families, and of the most illustrious states. Hence arise the various tales which have been invented to adorn the early annals. But the growth of mind seems to be liable to the same impulses and vicissitudes which characterize the material creation around us. One nation rises, when another falls, in the same way as one class or genus of the vegetable kingdom grows upon the ruins of another. The parent soil maintains, generally speaking, its primitive features: Britain is still the same verdant island, and Rome maintains the same turreted position on the Tiber's banks, which existed in the days of Cæsar; but new elements have entered into the constitution of the people who live under

either climate, and whilst the Romans are an unhappy and a degraded people, unable if not to claim, yet to maintain their liberty; the Britons have become a mighty race, daily asserting new and hitherto unknown privileges, which are an ornament and source of happiness to them and to the world around them, and by their arms and commerce, united in one high career, they dispense the blessings of civilization to countries that Cæsar never heard of[c].

[c] History has preserved to us several anecdotes relating to Cæsar himself and other private individuals, which, though they are of no importance as throwing light upon the expedition in general, may without impropriety be here added in a note at the conclusion of this Chapter. One of these is an adventure of a common soldier, related by Plutarch. [Life of Cæsar, s. 16.] "Some of the Roman officers had got into marshy ground, where they were attacked by the enemy: seeing this, a private soldier threw himself upon them before the eyes of Cæsar, who was watching the result of the battle, and performing prodigies of valour, succeeded in rescuing his officers, though he had afterwards to force his way back, partly by swimming, and partly by wading. In this adventure, however, he lost his shield, which was accounted a disgrace among the Romans. His comrades received him in triumph; but he, disconcerted at his loss, threw himself at Cæsar's feet, and supplicated forgiveness." We are told by Velleius Paterculus, that the narrative of Cæsar's exploits would fill many volumes: without this, we might be tempted to think that the following adventure related by Valerius Maximus, in rather bombastic language, (which we shall here omit,) is only a different version of the preceding. "Scæva, one of Cæsar's soldiers, with four of his comrades, crossed in a boat to a rock near the shore of the island, where they were left by the ebbing of the tide. They were speedily attacked by the Britons, and whilst the other four managed to escape in the boat, Scæva remained exposed to their darts, which fell in showers about him. He kept them at bay for some time with his sword, until at last wounded and spent with fatigue, he plunged into the sea, and swam back, though with the loss of his shield and helmet, in safety to the camp. Here he entreated the general's pardon for his fool-hardiness, and was raised to the rank of centurion in honour of

his bravery." This exploit, however, or another very similar to it, is laid by Cæsar himself, [iii. 53.] Appian, [ii. p. 465.] and Suetonius, [vi. 144.] near Dyrrachium, and by Dion Cassius, [xxxvii. 53.] on the coast of Portugal.

These anecdotes, however, whatever may have been their locality, are certainly much less improbable than the story told by Polyænus, who wrote more than 200 years later. In his description of Cæsar's passage of the Thames at Cowey Stakes, he says, that the Romans had in their army a very large elephant, an animal which the Britons had never before seen, and that it was the fright caused to both man and horse by so unwonted a sight which secured to them the victory. In refutation of so improbable a story, it is sufficient to say, that no trace of it is found in the contemporary historians.

Of the daring courage displayed by Cæsar himself in all his campaigns, we have abundant instances, without supposing, as the emperor Julian the Apostate states, [De Cæsar, p. 320.] that the general himself was the first who jumped out of his ship to attack the Britons: it is more gratifying to find, that Cæsar's habits of life and tone of mind were all formed upon a system to which no great man ever was an exception. "In the British campaign," says Athenæus—quoting from Cotta, a Greek writer, whose work on the polity of the Romans is unfortunately lost,—"Cæsar was content with only three domestic servants;" and Seneca adds, that "in the middle of his campaign in Britain, he heard of his daughter's death: yet in three days he had vanquished his grief, which gave way like every thing else, before his great and lofty mind."

CHAP. V.

SENSATION PRODUCED AT ROME BY THE BRITISH EXPEDITION—AUGUSTUS—NOTICES OF BRITAIN BY POETS AND GEOGRAPHERS.

When we consider the magnitude of the preparations which Cæsar made for his second expedition, it can hardly be doubted that his intention was to subjugate the whole of Britain, if possible, to the dominion of Rome. With this view, it was not difficult to find an excuse to justify his unprovoked aggressions on a brave and independent people; and if the Britons had not furnished him with a plea by withholding the tribute and hostages which they had promised, "there can be no doubt," says the historian Dion Cassius[a], "that he would have found another." But his mighty preparations, as we have seen, were baffled; and another hundred years were destined to elapse, before our brave and high-spirited ancestors bent their necks in submission to the greatest power that has ever yet been suffered to rule and tyrannize over mankind.

Whilst the Roman army were still in Britain, great anxiety was felt at Rome for the success of the expedition: and this was but natural, for the event of the war depended perhaps less on the tried discipline and courage of the Roman legions, than on the winds and waves, which in the northern regions where Britain was situated, at all times capricious and subject to

[a] Hist. xl. s. 1.

sudden impulses, might cut off communication with the mainland; and the Romans were at no period of their history very eminent as a naval nation. Another object of alarm was the peculiar nature of British warfare, conducted principally by cavalry and war-chariots. "Take care," says Cicero, in a letter written at the time to his friend Trebatius, who was serving under Cæsar, "that after you have so often cautioned your friends against surprises, you do not get taken unawares yourself by one of the British war-chariots." In another letter he tells the same friend to avoid two things, bathing in the sea, and coming in contact with the chariots. But a more ignoble cause of anxiety for the success of the expedition was the expectation of plunder, which more or less actuates all military expeditions. In the narrative of Cæsar, notice is taken of the private adventurers, mostly merchants, who accompanied him to Britain; but we are indebted to the great orator, who at this time had already reached the zenith of his glory, for more explicit allusions to the hopes of plunder that were entertained. He thus writes to Trebatius: "I hear there is no gold nor silver in Britain. If this is the case, I advise you to catch one of their chariots, and come back amongst us as soon as you can." And to Atticus he writes as follows; "We are looking out for the termination of the war in Britain. It appears that the approach to the island is wonderfully difficult: and by this time it is pretty well ascertained that there is not a scruple of gold or silver in all the island, and no hope of making booty, except from slaves; and I fancy you hardly expect to find any scholars or musicians among them." But Quintus, the brother of Marcus Tullius Cicero, was in the number of those, who followed Cæsar to Britain; and from the terms of the letters which he received from Marcus at Rome,

we may hope that the object of his journey was, in part at least, to study the new features which an unknown country and its novel race of inhabitants might present to the philosophic observer. "How delighted I was to receive your letter from Britain! For I had great fear about you from the sea and the rugged coast of that island. There were other circumstances of equal importance to influence me, but they raised rather my hopes than my fears. What a noble subject you now have for employing your pen! What descriptions you may now indulge in about the things and the places you have seen: their situations, the tribes you have been amongst, their manners, the battles you have been in, and the glorious commander you fought under?" ....." Your fourth letter, dated from Britain the 10th of August, reached me on the 13th of September. I also on the 28th of September received a letter from Cæsar dated the first of that month, in which he told me not to wonder at my getting no letter from you, for that you were not in his company, when he arrived on the coast."

The correspondence of Cicero with Cæsar was as frequent as the necessary occupations of the latter would permit: for in little more than a month another letter from Cæsar informed his correspondent of the state in which things then stood. "On the 24th of October," says Cicero to his friend Atticus, "I received letters from Cæsar and my brother Quintus, dated from the coast of Britain, Sept. 26th. The country had been reduced to submission, the hostages were delivered, and though no booty had been amassed, they had imposed a payment of money on the natives, and were re-transporting the army to the continent."

For these allusions to Cæsar's British expedition we are indebted to that eminent writer Cicero, whose

works, as voluminous as all those of his contemporaries and predecessors put together, are the greatest monument of an universal genius that has ever adorned the annals of a nation. But, though the conquests of Cæsar made great noise at Rome, we have few records of them, or notices of the island, besides those which are evidently taken from Cæsar's own commentaries: probably the very celebrity of the thing may be a reason why we have little more than allusions made by the poets of the day to such occurrences as were most likely to furnish conversation to the people. Thus Catullus, who wrote his lyric compositions, whilst Julius Cæsar was still alive, concludes one of his odes in these words[b],

Or o'er the lofty Alps shall go
And mighty Cæsar's records trace,
And view the Gallic Rhine, and furthest Britain's fearful race;

though Catullus did not always allude to Cæsar in terms of panegyric: for the following, though severe, was considered to be a just censure upon his boundless extravagance and debauchery.

AGAINST CÆSAR.

No eye can look upon it; none endure it,
Except a glutton, debauchee, or spendthrift,
That what the long-hair'd Gaul or distant Briton
Enjoyed before, a gladiator should squander.
Shame on you, Romans, will you view such deeds?
. . . . . .
Were these the ensigns, singular general,
'Neath which you fought in the remotest western isle?
. . . . . .
First your paternal wealth was spent and gone:
Next came the spoil from Pontus: then the third

[b] Carm. I. 11, 9. Ibid. I. 29.

From Spain and Tagus with its yellow sands.
Say, Gauls and Britons, did you fear this man?

The independence of the Britons, after all the mighty attempts of Cæsar, is hinted at in the following.

ON ACME AND SEPTIMIUS[d].

Septimius, lorn and luckless swain,
Would rather clasp his Acme dear,
Than reap the fruits of Syria's plain,
Or over all the Britons reign:
And Acme will no lover own
But her Septimius alone.

But whilst these effusions of the poets were signalizing the success or the reverses of Cæsar in the distant island, that general, triumphant over Pompey and over the republic, was cut off, still in the vigour of life, by as disgraceful an act of bloodshed as any which was ever hallowed by and at the same time desecrated the name of freedom. A new course of wars and confusion followed, which ended in the entire submission of the empire to Augustus, Cæsar's nephew, a man whose early career pointed out, that whilst he had sufficient cunning to guide any measures that might be necessary for his purposes, he was equally certain to stick at no act of violence which might ensure their success. But fortunately for Rome, her first emperor's character changed when his road to success was certain: he found his capital built of brick, and he left it of marble: he found his people groaning under that worst of evils, an intestine war, and he left it in the enjoyment of that greatest of blessings, the utmost measure of liberty which it was calculated to receive.

Augustus seems, as Tacitus says[e], to have intentionally slighted Britain, considering it a piece of

[d] Cat. Carm. xlii. [e] Agr. 13. as quoted by Camden, I. lxxvii.

policy, that the Roman empire should be bounded by the Ocean, the Ister, and the Euphrates, limits which nature herself seemed to have placed; or as Strabo hints, because he saw no great advantage to be gained by passing over into Britain. Whatever may have been the motive, it is certain that for a long time he abstained from interfering in the affairs of our island. At last, however[f], he set out for the purpose of reducing it to become a member of the empire, and it was on this occasion that Horace addressed to the Goddess Fortune of Antium that well-known prayer[g],

Serves iturum Cæsarem in ultimos
Orbis Britannos.

Propitious guard the prince, who bold explores
His vent'rous way to farthest Britain's shores.

But the emperor had no sooner arrived in Gaul, than the Britons sent a deputation to meet him. Some time was spent in negociation, and it would seem fruitlessly; for the historian Dion Cassius tells us, that the Britons would not enter into a treaty, and that Augustus, when on the point of invading the island, was withheld by a revolt of the Salassii[h].

But we learn from Strabo, in a passage which will hereafter be quoted, that the island was brought by fair means into a species of subordination to Rome, which exercised a sort of fascination, no doubt, such as civilization often practises over independent barbarians, preparing them, as predatory animals of the serpent tribe prepare their helpless prey, that they may submit the more easily to be swallowed and devoured.

That Britain was about this time brought into a little closer connection with the rest of the world, is certain from the continued allusions to its inhabitants

[f] Dio Cass. liii. 22. [g] Hor. i. 35, 29. [h] Dio Cass. liii. 25. [A. D. 26.]

found in the writings of the Roman poets, some of them shewing that they were as well known to the Romans as the Swiss in modern times at the court of France, or the Irish labourer in the streets of London.

Thus a custom noticed in Virgil's Georgics[i] shews more plainly, perhaps, than any other, the extent to which Britain had attracted the notice of the Roman public; for the curtain at the theatre, which was drawn up and seemed to rise out of the ground at the conclusion of the drama, was covered with figures of painted Britons, to which the poet refers in the lines,

> Or see how on the stage the shifting scenes
> In order pass, and pictured Britons rise
> Out of the earth, and raise the purple curtain.

But whilst these and other passages in the Latin Poets[k]

[i] Geor. iii. 21.

[k] Of these it will suffice to quote the following, extracted from the works of Lucretius, Propertius, Horace, Virgil, Ovid, and Gratius Faliscus, who all lived within fifty years after Cæsar, and long before any other Roman set foot, for purposes of conquest, on the shores of Britain.

LUCRETIUS vi. 1061.

> A traveller in every place he sees,
> Or hazards, or endures, a new disease,
> Because the air or water disagrees.
> How different is the air of Britain's isle,
> From that which plays upon the wand'ring Nile?
> What different air does Pontus' snows embrace,
> From that which fans the sun-burnt Indian's face?

PROPERTIUS II. XX. 63.

> Ye, mortals, seek to know man's hour of death,
> And also by what road death will approach:
> Ye trace Phœnician science in the heavens,
> And learn the influence of each star on man.
> Or, if by land the Parthian, or o'er sea
> We chase the Briton, ye would learn the dangers
> Which there await us or by land or sea.

shew that Cæsar's exploits in Britain met with their due share of popular notice, the opportunity, which the

HORACE, OD. I. xxi. 13. ON APOLLO.

He shall avert war's tears and famine's horrors,
And pestilence from Rome and from her Prince,
And banish them far off to distant Persia,
Or Britain, at your supplicating prayer.

OD. III. iv. 33. TO CALLIOPE.

Safe mid the Britons, fierce to stranger guests,
'Neath thy protection.

OD. III. v. 2. ON AUGUSTUS.

A present God Augustus shall be deem'd,
Persians and Britains bent beneath our yoke.

OD. IV. xiv. 47. TO AUGUSTUS.

The ocean full of monsters, which doth beat
On Britain's distant shores.

EP. I. vii. 7. ON CIVIL STRIFE.

Ye fight not that your arms may prostrate throw
Your British foe, by Rome still unsubdued,
And lead him chain'd a prisoner in the triumph.

VIRGIL. ECL. i. 65.

But we to Afric's thirsty shores must roam,
To Scythia, or Oaxes' rapid stream,
Or Britain from the world divided far.

GEORG. i. 30.

And distant Thule shall obey thy word.

OVID. MET. xv. 746—759.

Cæsar's a God in Rome: in war and peace
Conspicuous; but nor war, nor peace, nor triumph,
Nor glory of distinguished deeds at home,
Have raised him to this rank, or to a star
Have turned his glories, but his mighty Son,
Most glorious that of all his glorious deeds.
Say, is it more to vanquish azure Britons,
To sail one's fleet through the seven mouths of Nile
Papyrus-bearing, or Numidian rebels,
Cinyphian Juba, and the Pontus swelling
With Mithridates' names, to bend beneath
The yoke of Rome, to earn some triumphs and

opening of a new country afforded, of extending the bounds of science, was not lost upon the geographer Strabo, nor upon the historian Diodorus of Sicily.

It is doubtful to which of these is to be ascribed the priority in point of time: but the generally received opinion is, that both were contemporaries of Cæsar, and wrote their great works not many years after his death. It was consistent with the plan of these writers to introduce into their writings an account of the greatest discovery which their age could boast of: accordingly we find, both in the pages of Diodorus and of Strabo, some interesting accounts of the geography of Britain and of the manners of its inhabitants. These statements may be considered not so much as drawn from the narrative of Cæsar, which were then first published, as based upon oral information, gathered from the soldiers and private persons, who accompanied Cæsar in his expedition. Their accounts may be blended together as follows, and in

To merit more—than 'tis to be the Father
Of one, whom when the Gods gave for our ruler,
The Gods could do no more to save our race?

AM. 2. EL. 16, 38.

I do not seem to sing my native place,
But Scythia, fierce Cilicians, and green Britons,
And rocks which blush with Promethean blood.

GRATIUS FALISCUS. HUNTING POEM, 174.

But if you visit the Morinian shores,
Whose ebbing waves oft leave the Ocean doubtful,
And thence cross o'er to Britain, set aside
The form and colour, which in British dogs
Are the worst points, but, when the tug of war
And inbred courage spur them to their work,
Then is their metal seen; Molossian hound
In vain competes with them.

their own words, as far as the difference of language will allow:

"Britain is in shape triangular: its longest side lies parallel to Celtica, to which it is also equal in length: for each of these countries extends about four thousand and three or four hundred furlongs[l]. Celtica reaches from the mouths of the Rhine to the northern extremity of the Pyrenees near Aquitaine, and Britain has for its most easterly extremity that part of Kent[m] which is opposite the mouths of the Rhine, and reaches to its western extremity, which lies over against Aquitaine and the Pyrenees[n]. This is the shortest estimate of the distance between the Rhine and the Pyrenees: but the longest calculation makes the distance five thousand furlongs.

"There are four ports at which voyagers generally cross from the mainland to the island; those are at the

[l] Diodorus differs from Strabo in his estimate of the length of the south coast of Britain. His words are: "The shortest of its sides is seven thousand five hundred furlongs, and extends along Europe: the second side stretching from the strait to the vertex of the island, is fifteen thousand furlongs; and the third side twenty thousand furlongs: so that the whole circuit of the island is forty-two thousand five hundred furlongs." But it is manifest that neither of these two writers could at that time have possessed any certain information on the subject.

[m] Diodorus adds, that the Kentish promontory was said to be a hundred furlongs from the continent. Strabo says elsewhere, [Book I.] that Kent and the mouths of the Rhine were near enough to be in sight of one another. This observation confirms the opinion which generally is entertained, that the south-eastern promontory of Britain once extended much further towards Belgium and Holland than it does at present; and the tradition respecting the Goodwin sands having been once dry land, receives confirmation from it also.

[n] And is called Belerion, DIOD. The third promontory of Britain extends, they say, out towards the sea, and is called Orcas. DIOD.

mouths of the river Rhine, the Seine, the Loire, and the Garonne: but those, who cross from the country about the Rhine, do not sail from the very mouths of the river, but from the Morini, who border on the Menapians, where also is Itium, which the divine Cæsar used for a port when he crossed into the island. He set sail by night, and reached his destination the next day about ten o'clock, having accomplished a voyage of three hundred and twenty furlongs. He found the corn still in the fields on his arrival. The island is for the most part flat and woody, but there are many strong places on hills.—It is said to be very populous, and the climate every where cold, as lying so far towards the north-pole.—It produces corn, cattle, gold, silver, and iron: which also form its exports, together with skins, slaves, and dogs of a superior breed for the chase. The Gauls use these dogs in war, as well as others of their own breed. Britain is said to be inhabited by indigenous tribes, who retain traces of ancient manners.—In some respects, they are similar to the Gauls, but more simple and barbarous, far removed from the cunning and vice of men of the present day: their food is plain and inexpensive, and very unlike the luxury which wealth creates.—The men are taller than the Gauls; and not so yellow-haired, but more corpulent. And this is an instance of their stature: I saw at Rome some young men, who were six inches taller than the tallest natives, but they were distorted in their feet, and not of a good figure. Though the country abounds in milk, there are some among the natives who do not know how to make cheese, and they are neither acquainted with the use of gardens, nor understand other branches of agriculture.—In gathering in the produce of their corn-fields they cut off the

stalks of corn, and store them up in thatched houses, and out of these they pluck the old ears from day to day, and use them to make their food.—They have several kings and chieftains amongst them, and are in general peaceably disposed towards one another[o].—They mostly use chariots in war, as some of the Gauls also do, and as the ancient Grecian heroes are said to have done at the siege of Troy.

"Their towns are the hills, on the tops of which they enclose a large space with felled trees, and within this fence they make for themselves huts composed mostly of reeds and logs, and sheds for their cattle: but these establishments are not permanent. The sky is rather stormy than cloudy, and in fine weather there is a mist which lasts some time, so that the sun is only seen for about three or four hours in the middle of the day. But this is also the case with the Morini and the Menapii, and other tribes in their neighbourhood.

"The divine Cæsar crossed over twice into the island, but he speedily returned without effecting any thing of consequence, or penetrating far into the country: for he was prevented by disaffection and quarrels among the Gauls, and also his own soldiers, besides which he lost many of his ships by the high tides, which prevail there at the full of the moon. He defeated the Britons in two or three battles, though he carried over only two divisions of his army, and he brought away host-

[o] This is evidently a mistake of Diodorus: Mela gives a very different and much more probable account. "They are continually engaged in war, for which they are eager to find excuses, because they are fond of empire, and endeavour to augment their territories by conquest. They fight not only on foot and on horse-back, but in chariots drawn by two and four horses: they are armed after the fashion of the Gauls, and have scythes fastened to the axles of their chariots, which they call covines."

ages and slaves, besides other booty[p] in abundance. At present however some of their princes have sent ambassadors to cultivate the friendship of Augustus Cæsar, and deposited offerings in the Capitol, and so brought the whole island to be in friendly connection with the Romans. They pay tolls of a trifling value, on all exports to Gaul and imports from thence: these are in general ivory bracelets, necklaces, glass-vessels, and such-like small wares. Thus there is no necessity for garrisoning the island: for it would require at least one legion and some cavalry, in order to gather tribute from it, and so the expense of the army would be equal to the income; for the tolls must be lessened, if taxes were added, besides the dangers which would be encountered, if force were used.

"Let us now speak of the tin which it produces. The inhabitants of Britain, who live near the Belerian promontory, are peculiarly hospitable, and, from the great resort of foreigners, more polished in manners. They prepare the tin, and shew much skill in working the earth which produces it. This being of a stony nature and having earthy veins in every direction, they work their way into these veins, and so by means of water separate the fragments. These they bruise into small pieces, and convey to an island which lies in front of Britain, called Ictis[q]: for at the great ebbs of the tide the channel becomes dry[r], and they carry

[p] This statement seems rather at variance with the letter of Cicero quoted at p. 55; perhaps the truth may lie between the two: it is likely that slaves formed the principal portion of the plunder which Cæsar carried away from Britain.

[q] The Isle of Wight, called Vectis by the Latin historians.

[r] With this account of Diodorus may be compared the statement of Strabo quoted at page 10.

over the tin in large quantities on waggons. There is a singular circumstance connected with all the neighbouring islands which lie between Britain and the continent of Europe. At high tide they are islands, because the intervening channel is full of water; but at the ebb the sea withdraws, and a large space is left uncovered, so that they look like peninsulas. From Ictis the tin is purchased by native merchants, and transported to Gaul: and finally it is carried by land through Gaul, a journey of thirty days, on pack-horses to the mouth of the Rhone. This account of the tin may suffice at present[s]."

"There are also some smaller islands in the neighbourhood of Britain, and a large one called Ierne, which runs parallel to it on the north, and extends to a greater width. We have no certain information about this island, except that its inhabitants are wilder than the Britons, and very voracious: they are cannibals, and hold it right to eat their fathers when they die: their customs as regards women affect publicity, nor is incest illegal among them.

"The climate is unfavorable to the ripening of grain, but so luxuriant in herbage, which is very rich and sweet, that the cattle very soon fill themselves, and, if they were not driven off, would overfeed themselves and burst. Its inhabitants are uncivilized and ignorant of every virtue: to the social affections they are utter strangers[t]."

"But we give even these statements with hesita-

[s] The present breadth of the channel between the coast of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, as compared with this account, would lead us to infer, that the sea, in the lapse of ages, has made great havoc with the whole of the south-coast of England. See note at page 62.

[t] Mela, iii 6.

tion, as depending on no certain testimony. As to their cannibalism, however, that custom prevails among the Scythians, and, under the restraints of a siege, the Gauls, Iberians, and many other nations, are said to do the same."

"There are thirty islands called Orcades, [Orkneys,] a short distance apart from one another: the Hæmodæ [Hebrides] are seven in number, and lie towards Germany[u]."

"But concerning Thule, our accounts are still more obscure on account of its remote position, for it is said to be the most northerly of all countries. The narrative of Pytheas about this and other places in the same part of the world is fictitious, and of this we have proofs in what he has said of those parts of the world with which we are acquainted, for his stories are generally false, as we have elsewhere remarked: so that he must evidently have written much farther from the truth about those countries which are beyond our knowledge. As regards the climate and in matters of physical science he may be supposed to be sufficiently correct, considering that it is so near to the north pole: for he says, that of fruitful trees and animals there is great paucity, and of some a total want, that the inhabitants feed on millet and herbs, fruits and roots, and that wherever there is corn and honey, they manufacture a liquid from them to drink: and because they have not enough sunshine, they thresh their corn in large houses, carrying in the straw with the grain, for their threshing-floors become unserviceable on account of the dull weather and the storms[x].

[u] Mela, iii. 6.

[x] The Roman geographer, Pomponius Mela, gives the following account of Thule, so famous both in Grecian and Roman history.

"It is opposite the coast of the Belgæ. In it the nights are short, because of the long time which elapses between sunrise and his setting in the west: in summer the nights are light, because the sun, at that period ascending higher into the heavens, though he is not seen, yet lights up all the neighbouring parts with his splendour: but at the solstice there is no night at all, because the sun then becomes more plain, and shews not only his beams, but the greatest part of its orb." It is probable that Iceland is the Thule of the ancients; though this opinion is certainly incompatible with the description of Pomponius Mela. Some modern writers have identified it with Denmark or Norway, and others have not hesitated to assert that by Thule the ancients mean Britain itself.

CHAP. VI.

BRITAIN LEFT TO ITSELF BY TIBERIUS—THE FOOLISH EXPEDITION OF CALIGULA—CLAUDIUS—CONQUEST OF BRITAIN BY HIS GENERAL PLAUTIUS.—VESPASIAN AFTERWARDS EMPEROR.

DURING the long reign of the emperor Augustus[a], little is known of what passed in the island of Britain; but that it began at this time to emerge from its ancient condition is not only in harmony with the faint notices of it which the Roman historians have left us, but is what the nature of the case would lead us to expect. The contact between civilization and barbarism, riches and poverty, seldom takes place without producing a sensible tendency towards amelioration on the side of the inferior: and it is morally certain that a people of simple and primeval habits like the Britons would have abundant opportunity, in imitating the civilized and already degenerate Romans, of engrafting much refinement and many vices upon their native manners.

In the year of our Lord 14, Tiberius, son in law of Augustus, ascended the imperial throne, and, as ambition and love of conquest were not his ruling bias, it is no wonder that he left Britain, as he found it, in the enjoyment of its native independence. Cunobelin[b],

[a] The reign of Augustus is dated from B. C. 42 to his death, which happened A. D. 14.

[b] Cunobelin is called Kimbelin by Matthew of Westminster, who says that he died A.D. 22, and was succeeded by Guiderius, who is

who occurs as its king or principal chieftain under Augustus, was still living in the reign of his successor, and, if we may trust to the evidence furnished by the Numismatic science, the name of Cunobelin seems not unworthy to be inserted among those of the greatest men that our country has produced. No less than forty different varieties of coins[c] have been discovered, bearing the name of Cunobelin or of Camalodunum his capital and residence. It is evident from the inspection of these authentic monuments that they were framed upon the Roman model: and this fact confirms the supposition, that Britain made great progress in the arts of social life, during the period which we are now reviewing. As yet also a good understanding generally prevailed between the chiefs of the island and the Roman authorities: for in the first year of the reign of Tiberius, his kinsman Germanicus, whilst pursuing his military career in Germany, lost several ships of his fleet by a storm, and the soldiers who were on board, were cast away on different parts of the adjoining coast. Some of them, we are told, were thrown

supposed by Alford to be the same as Togodumnus. But such a supposition being entirely gratuitous, is of no value, and the authority of Matthew of little weight. The Cymbeline of Shakespere is no doubt the Cunobelin of the Romans.

[c] See Gough's Camden, vol. i. p. cxiii. where three coins are engraved. The various conflicting opinions which are there stated will convince the reader how totally ignorant we are of every thing connected with these coins, except the fact of their existence. The abbreviated forms CVNO, BOADI, and CAMOL, which occur on some of them, most probably designate the words Cunobelin, Boadicea, and Camalodunum, but the words TASCIA and TASCIO still puzzle all the ingenuity of archæologists. Camden's interpretation, that they designate tax or tribute money, is just as likely as Pegge's, that they denote the name of the Roman mint master who was invited over by Cunobelin to superintend the coinage.

on the shores of Britain, and were sent back by the chieftains.

Tiberius also descended to the grave, and Britain was still free. The childish, and afterwards the cruel, Caligula succeeded to the imperial throne, which he occupied from A. D. 37 to 41, a period of four years. If we are to believe the strange narrative of Suetonius, this worthless emperor meditated a campaign against the Germans and Britons, and to intimidate them beforehand by executing some mighty work which should display his power, he gave orders for the construction of a bridge from Baiæ to Puteoli, over an arm of the sea, nearly two miles wide. This work was executed in imitation of the similar achievement performed by Xerxes about 500 years before, over the Hellespont: but if we are to believe what history tells of this contemptible monarch, his bridge would be more likely to excite ridicule than terror in the warlike nations, whose subjugation he was meditating.

The expedition, thus singularly prefaced, was actually commenced, though it ended in a way which might have been anticipated from its foolish beginning. Adminius[d], a son of Cunobelin the British king, had been driven from his father's court, and fled across the sea to find refuge with a few followers among the Romans. This man was received by Caligula, and became a vassal of the empire. Intelligence of the event was forwarded to Rome in a letter conceived in most extravagant terms, and addressed to the Roman Senate. The whole island was described as reduced to submission, and the imperial messenger received orders not to halt at the usual place, but to drive into the Forum, and

[d] Orosius [vii. 3.] calls this prince Minocunobelinus.

to deliver his credentials no where else than in the temple of Mars, and before a full assembly of the Senate.

After this, the emperor led his army down to the sea coast, as if to prosecute the war: here he ordered his men to be drawn up on the beach, and the military engines to be arranged for action. Whilst all were lost in astonishment, and unable to conjecture what they were going to do, Caligula, who had launched out to sea for a short distance and again returned, gave the word of command, and the soldiers fell to gathering the shells that lay upon the shore, and to fill their helmets and their bosoms with them. These the emperor described as the "spoils of Ocean, to be laid up in the Roman Capitol." In token of this victory they built upon the sea shore a lofty tower*, which, whilst it reminded the better-educated traveller of the ridiculous cause of its erection, served for ages as a light house and beacon to many an ignorant seaman, who had never heard of the name or of the follies of Caligula.

The death of this prince, A.D. 41, made way for Claudius, less sunk in vice and cruelty, but in intellect more obtuse than his predecessor. It is remarkable, however, that a man of a capacity confessedly so low should have accomplished that which had been so long delayed, the annexation of Britain to the Roman

* "The ruins of this are to be seen sometimes at low water on the coast of Holland, and are called by the people Britonhuis. Stones with inscriptions are frequently found, one of which had these letters C.C. P.F. which some, how justly I know not, read Caius Caligula Pharum fecit." Gough, Camden, I. lxxviii. Some authors say it was the *Tour de Call*, so called from Caligula, and others the *Tour d'ordre* at Boulogne.

empire. The motive also which induced Claudius to undertake this enterprise, is inconsistent with the reputed character of that prince. "The senate had voted him the insignia of a triumph," says Suetonius, who wrote about eighty years later, "but he thought his title to this honour insufficient, and unworthy the dignity of a prince. Wherefore, that he might obtain it in a more regular way, he chose Britain as his field of action, because no one had ever made an attempt on it since the days of Julius Cæsar, and it was now in a disturbed state, because some deserters had not been given up." Who these deserters were, is not clearly shewn; but Dion Cassius, who wrote nearly two hundred years later, tells us, that one Beric had been driven out of Britain by an insurrection, and took refuge at the court of Claudius, whom he persuaded to send an army to conquer the whole island. This invitation harmonized well with the emperor's preconceived views of conquest; an army was immediately raised, and Aulus Plautius, a distinguished senator, placed to command it. This expedition was undertaken in the third year of the reign of Claudius, which coincides with the year A. D. 43, but operations were not commenced, as was usual with the armies of the ancients, early in the spring; this was owing to the distance, which delayed their proceedings until the autumn; and partly to the rebellious conduct of the soldiers; for though the campaign lasted only six months, yet we find it extended into the following year.

Interesting as it would be to all Englishmen to trace minutely the incidents which marked the final subjugation of an island to the dominion of Rome, we are unfortunately compelled to take all we know of this period from the pen of Dion, a writer who lived

two centuries after the events which he describes, and whose authority would have been of little weight in comparison of that which results from the evidence of an eyewitness, or even of a contemporary historian.

In such cases it is important not further to dilute a narrative which already comes to us second hand. The description which Dion gives us of the expedition and conquest of Britain runs as follows[f]:

"Plautius, taking the command, had great difficulty in persuading his men to leave Gaul. For the soldiers were highly enraged, as though they were about to make war beyond the habitable world; nor would they obey him until Narcissus, having been sent by Claudius, ascended the tribunal of Plautius, and expressed a wish to address them. But then, they became much more enraged against him than against Plautius, and would not permit him to utter one word; but suddenly shouting out the well-known sound of 'Io Saturnalia,' which the slaves shout during the festival of Saturn when they assume the characters of their masters and give themselves up to revelry, they immediately followed Plautius with alacrity. In consequence of these proceedings, they were delayed in commencing their expedition. At length they were divided into three bodies, lest if they attempted to land all at one point they should meet with obstruction; and, during their passage, whilst they were somewhat disheartened on the one hand by the wind which blew against them, they were encouraged on the other hand by a meteor which springing from the east darted across towards the west, whither they were navigating. In due time they landed on the island without opposition. For the Britons,

[f] Dion Cass. lx. ss. 19—23.

from what they had learned, not expecting that they would come, had not assembled together; nor even when they arrived did they attack them, but fled to the marshes and woods, hoping to wear them out by delay; and that, as had happened under Julius Cæsar, they would go back without effecting their purpose.

"Plautius, therefore, had much difficulty in seeking them out; but when at last he discovered them, as they were not independent but subject to different kings, he overcame first Cataratacus, then Togodumnus, the sons of Cynobellinus, who was now dead. These taking to flight, he brought a part of the Boduni, who were under the dominion of the Catuellani, to terms of peace. Here leaving a garrison, he proceeded farther. But when they arrived at a certain river, which the barbarians supposed the Romans could not pass without a bridge, and in consequence had taken up their position carelessly on the opposite bank, he sent forward the Celti, who, even armed, were accustomed to swim with ease over the most rapid rivers; and they, attacking them contrary to their expectation, wounded, not the men indeed, but the horses which drew their chariots; which being thrown into confusion, their drivers were no longer safe. Next he sent over Flavius Vespasianus, who afterwards became emperor, and his brother Sabinus second in command; these also, having passed the river at a certain place, took the barbarians by surprise, and slew many of them. The rest, however, did not fly, but the following day again maintained the conflict nearly on equal terms, until Cneius Osidius Geta, though in imminent danger of being made prisoner, at last so completely defeated them, that he received

triumphal honours, although he had not yet served the office of consul. The Britons thence retreated to the river Thames, where it empties itself into the ocean, and becomes an estuary at high tide; and easily passed it, as they were well acquainted with those parts which were firm and fordable. The Romans pursued them, and on this point failed to overtake them; but the Celti again swimming over, and others passing a little higher up by means of a bridge, they attacked them on every side, and cut off many of them; but, as they pressed too rashly on the remainder, they wandered into the pathless marshes, and lost many of their own soldiers[g].

"On this account, therefore, as well as because on the death of Togodumnus the Britons would not give way, but rather banded together to avenge him, Plautius became alarmed, and advanced no farther; however he did what he could to secure his present acquisitions, and sent for Claudius: for so he had been instructed to do, should aught of greater difficulty arise; since much preparation had been made, and even elephants provided for this expedition. On receiving this intelligence, Claudius set out for the seat of war, and sailing from Ostia[h], he went by sea to

[g] It was probably in this skirmish that the accident happened as related by the same historian Dion Cassius, [s. 30.] which had well nigh deprived the Britons of one of their greatest emperors. "In Britain," says Dion, "Vespasian being surrounded by the barbarians, and in imminent danger of being slain, Titus, his son, alarmed for his father, broke through the enemies, dispersed them with extraordinary gallantry, and pursued them with great slaughter."

[h] "And was twice nearly shipwrecked by a violent northwest wind near Liguria and the Stœchadian islands. Wherefore he completed his journey by land from Marseilles to Gessoriacum." Suetonius Claud. xvii.

Massalia, and afterwards, journeying partly by land and partly by the rivers, he arrived at the ocean, and passing over into Britain, there joined the forces which awaited him near the Thames. Taking the command, therefore, and crossing the river, he came into conflict with the barbarians who had assembled on his approach, overthrew them in battle, and took Camalodunum, the royal residence of Cynobellinus. After this he brought many into subjection, some by submission, others by force, and was repeatedly hailed emperor contrary to the custom of his country; for no person is allowed to receive this appellation more than once during the same war. And having disarmed them, he placed them under the government of Plautius, commanding him to subdue the remainder. As for himself, he hastened to Rome, sending forward the news of his victory by his sons-in-law Magnus and Silanus.

"The senate, on learning what had been achieved, surnamed him Britannicus, granted him a triumph, and voted him annual games, a triumphal arch in the city, and another in Gaul, whence he had passed over into Britain. To his son, also, they gave the same surname, so that the title Britannicus should be, in a manner, peculiarly his own.

"A part therefore of Britain being thus subdued, in the consulship of Caius Crispus the second time and Titus Statilius, [A.D. 44.] Claudius, after six months absence, of which he had passed only sixteen days in Britain, returned to Rome, and triumphed; performing all other acts in due order, and, in addition, ascending the steps of the Capitol upon his knees, supported on either side by his sons-in-law. Moreover, he distributed to the senators who had served with him, not exclusively to those of consular dignity, triumphal

honours, which at other times, also, he lavished profusely on the most trifling occasions. To Rubrius Pollio his præfect he granted a statue, and a seat in the senate-house as often as he should accompany him thither; and lest he should appear to innovate at all in this respect, he observed that Augustus had acted in like manner towards one Valerius a Ligurian. Lacon also, who had formerly presided over the nightly guard, and was at that time procurator of Gaul, he dignified with the like and even with consular honours. Having completed these acts, he exhibited triumphal games, assuming for this purpose a certain consular power. These were performed in two theatres at once; he himself was frequently absent from the spectacle, and then others conducted it in his stead. He promised them as many horse-races as the day would admit of, which were not, however, more than ten; for bears also were slaughtered, and wrestlers contended between the courses: and boys sent for out of Asia performed the Pyrrhic dance. And another pageant in celebration of the victory was exhibited by the artizans employed about the theatre, by permission of the senate. Such things were done on account of the conquest of Britain; and that other nations there might the more readily come to terms, it was decreed that all covenants which Claudius or his legates had made with any of those nations should be as binding as if made by the senate and the people."

These rejoicings[1] seem to shew that Britain was

[1] Among other ceremonies, crowns of gold were presented to the emperor by the provinces. Gallia Comata, according to Pliny [xxxiii. 16.], presented one weighing nine pounds, and Spain a second weighing seven pounds. The emperor displayed his

considered no mean addition to the already overgrown empire of Rome; and this opinion is confirmed by the frequent discovery of coins struck in commemoration of the event. One of these bears the magnificent inscription 'Tiberius Claudius Cæsar Augustus, Tribune for the sixth and emperor for the eleventh time!' This piece, struck A. D. 46, or two years after the events which we have been relating, bears upon its reverse the record, "Over the Britons," inscribed on a triumphal car, surmounted by an equestrian statue between two trophies; but the emperor had not yet learnt to heighten his triumph by the contrast of a female captive sitting pensive in the dust, and mourning the havoc which the conqueror had caused to herself and to her native country.

magnificence by sea also; for he entered the Adriatic sea in a ship of so immense a size, that Pliny [iii. 20.] says it rather resembled a house than a ship. The triumphal procession by land was attended with unusual circumstances of rejoicing, for not only the governors of provinces joined in it, but even certain persons who had been exiles were allowed to return and participate in the festivity. A naval crown also was fixed on the top of the palace, to denote that the ocean itself had submitted to their arms. [Sueton. Claud. 17.] There are still in existence inscriptions recording these and other privileges granted to those who had been associated in the British expedition, or were otherwise connected with the emperor, and took part in the solemnities of his triumph. See the "HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS."

CHAP. VII.

PLAUTIUS—VESPASIAN—OSTORIUS SCAPULA—CARACTACUS.

THE conquest of Britain threw over the feeble reign of Claudius a certain degree of glory, in which the emperor himself, perhaps more by the obsequiousness of the age than from his own arrogance, was supposed to have participated. But it is some little praise to Claudius that he did not neglect the deserving generals to whom he really owed the success of his expedition. Plautius, its leader, was allowed to celebrate his victories by the lesser kind of triumph, which the Romans called an ovation,—a sad contrast, we may remark, to the age of Cincinnatus or of Fabricius, when merit would have secured the triumph for the successful general, and the ovation for him whose services deserved it. But the Romans, with monarchy, had adopted all its faults; one of which, and that not the smallest perhaps, is the unworthy award of honours to rank and title, whilst large toil and little remuneration await those who contend on the arena of public life without these accessories.

Among other officers engaged in Britain, the name of Vespasian has already occurred: he held the rank of consular lieutenant both to Plautius during the campaign in general, and to Claudius during the short time that he was in Britain. In the discharge of this

office he was often entrusted with the command of a separate army, and gave the first proofs of that military capacity, which twenty-five years afterwards gained for him the empire of the world.

This appointment had been procured for Vespasian by the favour of Narcissus, a freedman of Claudius, and probably an eunuch[a]; for the vicious customs of Eastern courts had already extended to the Roman city. But, however sinister the influence by which Vespasian obtained office, his services to the cause of his country were most distinguished. To him alone are ascribed the subjugation of two of the fiercest British tribes and the capture of twenty towns; whilst the Isle of Wight submitted to his arms, and was permanently embodied in the Roman empire. These achievements rendered Vespasian's[b] name celebrated at Rome; the triumphal ornaments were awarded to him, and he was twice appointed to the priesthood within an unusually short space of time. Titus also, son of Vespasian, and at a later date successor to his father on the throne, distinguished himself in the British war, where he was a tribune of the soldiers: and to commemorate his services both here and in Germany, we are informed by Suetonius, that numberless statues were erected to him in both those countries; though in modern times, when so many remains of Roman

[a] Suetonius in Vita Vespas. 4. Another eunuch, Posides, is said to have distinguished himself in the British war, and to have received a "hasta pura" as a reward of his bravery. Sueton. Claud. 28. He is called Possidius by Aurelius Victor, Epit. 4.

[b] "Nero sought out Vespasian, who by his arms had recovered Britain, previously but little known; whence he afforded his father Claudius the means of a triumph, without any exertion on his own part." Josephus de Bello Jud. iii. 1.

art have come to light, no statue or inscription has yet been discovered in Britain of the emperor Titus.

Whether these events preceded the return of Claudius from Britain, or happened afterwards, when that lethargic monarch had relapsed into the routine of courtly pomp, leaving his generals to complete the conquest of which he had himself engrossed the credit, history has not informed us: but when we read that the distant Orkneys were in this reign subdued and added to the empire, we may infer with much probability that such extensive operations could hardly have been carried on during the few months which intervened between the commencement of the expedition and the return of Claudius to Rome. The war in Britain, therefore, was still raging, notwithstanding that the triumphal[e] procession of the emperor appeared to announce to his subjects that it was ended: but of the events which signalized the five years between A. D. 45 and 50, no intelligence has reached us. During that interval, Plautius was recalled, and this created a pause in the progress of the Roman arms, which was not lost upon the brave and active islanders.

In the year 50 the war began again to assume a serious character. The place of Aulus Plautius, the

[e] We have the explicit statements of Eusebius [Chron. ex interp. Hieron. lib. ii.] and Cassiodorus, [Chron.] that the triumph of Claudius took place in the fourth year of his reign, i. e. A.D. 44, the year in which he returned from Britain. It may be worth while to mention, that Suetonius, followed by Jornandes, a writer of the fifth century, says, that Claudius reduced part of Britain without war or bloodshed. It is evident that this description alludes to the brief and peaceful display of magnificence which marked the sixteen days' stay of the emperor, rather than to the hard fighting by which his generals established the Roman dominion in the island.

Roman governor, was then supplied by Ostorius Scapula, a general of consular dignity, and appointed to manage affairs in Britain with the title of Proprætor. Of the transactions which mark his government, an interesting account has been left us by the historian Tacitus[d], who, writing forty years later, may have gained his information from the oral testimony of persons who had themselves served in Britain.

"Ostorius, arriving in his province, found things in the greatest disorder: for the enemy had overrun all the lands of those natives who had submitted to the Roman government, and they had no suspicion that the new governor would march against them with an army to which he was a stranger, and at the beginning of winter. But Ostorius knew that the enemy would gain additional confidence by his inactivity, and he determined to strike them with a salutary terror by the promptness of his first measures. For this purpose he marched against them with such troops as he had at hand, cut to pieces all who opposed him in the field, and fiercely pursued the fugitives without giving them time to rest or rally.

"He also determined to make no peace or enter into any engagements, which he knew would have no other end than to give the enemy time to take breath, but to force all the tribes, of whose fidelity he had any suspicion, to lay down their arms, and to enclose them within a line of fortresses drawn from the river Avon[e] to the Severn. This step was first opposed by the Iceni, a powerful nation, and hitherto unbroken by the

[d] Annals xii. 31—40.

[e] The original is Aufona, not Antona, as in many editions—a most happy emendation of the text.

war, because they had before voluntarily embraced our alliance. By their advice, the neighbouring tribes appointed a place for battle, enclosed by a rude rampart of earth, with a narrow entrance, and inaccessible to horsemen. These works the Roman general, though he had only the auxiliary troops of the allies and no legionaries, attempted to force, and disposing his cohorts, drew up likewise some troops of horse before the rampart. Upon a signal given they broke down the works, and fell upon the enemy, who became entangled in their own inclosure[f], but from a consciousness of their revolt, and despair of escaping, they performed many gallant actions. In this battle Marcus Ostorius[g], son of the lieutenant, gained the honour of having saved the life of a citizen.

"The defeat of the Iceni awed those nations which fluctuated between peace and war, and the army advanced against the Cangi, whose territories they ravaged, carrying off much booty: for the enemy did not dare to face them, and if they fell upon the rear by surprise, were sure to pay dear for it. In this manner the army got pretty near the sea that looks towards the island of Ireland, when disorders arising among the

[f] Claustris. Gale proposes to read *plaustris*, "by their own waggons, which proved a like impediment to Boadicea's army." Gough's Camden, vol. i. page lxxx. note.

[g] The murder of this brave man by the tyrant who reigned after Claudius is related by Tacitus in these words, "Ostorius was absent at this time on the frontiers of Liguria: thither a centurion was despatched to expedite his death. The cause of this haste arose from the high military reputation of Ostorius, which had gained for him the honours of a civic crown in Britain, added to which, his great personal strength and skill in arms had given alarm to Nero." Tac. Ann. xvi. 15.

Brigantes, obliged the general to return; for he was ever attentive not to make new conquests, till the former advantages were secured. The Brigantes, after the slaughter of a few who had taken up arms, returned to their obedience, and obtained forgiveness: but neither severity nor milder measures had any effect on the Silures, who continued in arms, and required the force of the legions to reduce them. The sooner to accomplish this, a colony was placed at Camalodunum, consisting of a numerous body of veterans, who took possession of the conquered lands, ready to assist their countrymen against any revolt, and bring their allies into obedience to the Roman laws.

"The army next marched against the Silures, who, in addition to the native ferocity of their tribe, placed great hopes in the valour of Caractacus, whom the many changes and prosperous turns of fortune had advanced to a preeminence over the rest of the British leaders. He, skilfully availing himself of his knowledge of the country to countervail his inferiority in numbers, transferred the war into the country of the Ordovices, and being joined by those who distrusted the peace subsisting between them and us, soon brought matters to a decisive issue, for he posted himself on a spot to which the approaches were as advantageous to his own party as they were perplexing to us. He then threw up on the more accessible parts of the highest hills a kind of rampart of stone; below and in front of which was a river difficult to ford[h], and on the works

[h] "There is a hill called Caer Caradoc, close to the confluence of the rivers Clune and Teme, which exactly corresponds with the place described by Tacitus as the scene of the battle which ensued. Caer Caradoc had probably been the royal seat and stronghold of some of the British princes from immemorial time. It was situated on the

were placed troops of soldiers. The respective leaders also went round to animate and inspirit them, to dispel their fears, whilst they magnified their hopes, and urged every encouragement usual on these occasions.

"Caractacus, running from one to another, bade them consider that the result of that day would be the beginning of new liberty to them, or of confirmed and lasting slavery. He set before them the example of their ancestors, who had driven Cæsar the dictator out of Britain, and by whose valour they had been hitherto preserved from axes and tributes, and their wives and children from dishonour. The people received these animating harangues with loud acclamations, engaging themselves by the most solemn rites, according to the religion of their country, never to yield to weapons or wounds.

"Their resolution astonished the Roman general, and the river which ran before them, together with the ramparts and the steeps which rose in their way, presented to the assailants a formidable aad resolute appearance. But the soldiers were clamorous for the charge, crying out that valour would bear down all opposition: and the inferior officers, inspiring the same sentiments, gave new courage to the troops. Ostorius, after reconnoitering the ground to see which parts were impenetrable and which accessible, led on the eager soldiers, and with much difficulty crossed the river. When they came to the rampart, while they only threw their darts at a distance, our soldiers suffered the most, and numbers were slain: but when they

ridge of a steep mountain." THACKERAY. It may be added, that the name Caer Caradoc seems to have been taken from that of the British Prince, of whom it was the castle or fortress. CAER CARADOC in British; CASTRA CARACTACI in Latin.

closed their ranks, and placed their shields over them, they soon tore down the rough irregular piles of stones, and coming to close quarters on equal ground, they obliged the barbarians to flee to the hills. Thither also both the light and heavy armed soldiers followed them, the former attacking them with their spears, the latter in a dense body, till the Britons, who had no armour or helmets to shelter them, were thrown into confusion; and, if they made any resistance to the auxiliaries, they were cut in pieces by the swords and spears of the legionaries; against whom when they turned, they were destroyed by the sabres and javelins of the auxiliaries. The victory was a brilliant one: the wife and daughter of Caractacus were taken, and his brothers submitted to the conqueror.

"Caractacus himself furnished an example of the dangers which misfortune brings with it; for throwing himself upon the protection of Cartismandua queen of the Brigantes, he was put in irons, and given up to the conquerors. This happened in the ninth year after the war first broke out in Britain. His fame, which had reached the islands and the neighbouring provinces and even Italy, made people eager to see what kind of man it was who had so long set our power at defiance. Nor was the name of Caractacus inconsiderable at Rome, and the Emperor, in advancing his own glory, added to that of the conquered prince. The people were assembled as if to see some great sight: the prætorian cohorts were under arms in the field before the camp. First came the king's dependents and retinue, with the trappings, collars, and other trophies, which he had won in foreign wars: next came his brothers, wife and daughter, and last himself appeared before the assembled multitude. The others gave

vent to their terror in unworthy supplications: but Caractacus neither by his looks nor his language appeared to claim their commiseration. When he came in front of the royal throne, he addressed the emperor in these words:

"'If I had made that prudent use of prosperity which my rank and fortune enabled me to do, I might have come hither as your friend rather than your prisoner: nor would you have disdained the alliance of a king descended from illustrious ancestors, and ruling over many nations. My present condition, degrading as it is to me, reflects glory on you. I once had horses, men, arms, and money: what wonder is it if I was reluctant to part from them! Your object is to obtain universal empire, and we must all be slaves! If I had submitted to you without a blow, neither my own fortune nor your glory would have been conspicuous, and all remembrance of me would have vanished, when I had received my punishment: but spare me my life, and I shall be a lasting monument of your clemency!'

"The emperor immediately pardoned Caractacus, and spared the lives of his wife and brothers. Their chains were struck off, and when they had made obeisance to the emperor, they advanced to pay the same respect to the empress Agrippina, who sat on a raised seat not far off. A woman sitting at the head of the Roman army, among the Roman ensigns, and seeming to command them, was a new sight, and very foreign to the manners of our forefathers; but her family had helped to gain the empire, and she claimed a share in the honours. After this, an assembly of the Senate was held, and many congratulatory speeches were made on the taking of Caractacus. It was considered as illustrious an occasion as the capture of Syphax, Paulus,

Perses, or any other of those kings, who were led before the Roman people; and the insignia of triumph were accordingly voted to Ostorius."

Caractacus retired from before the throne, safe in the imperial clemency from the ignominy and perhaps death, which, to the shame of Rome, was generally the fate of captive monarchs; but the noble-minded Briton, barbarian as they called him, possessed a soul superior to the condition to which fortune had reduced him. As he walked through the streets of Rome, admiring its size and beauty, a thought of his native island flashed across his mind,—of its lowly cottages, and of the wild independence which he had enjoyed as he roamed through his paternal forests. "Is it possible," he exclaimed, "that the Romans, who possess such splendid palaces at home, can envy me my humble cottage in Britain[1]?" Thus closed the career of a patriotic prince, who, under the influence of a more prosperous fortune, might have risen to the highest eminence, and been classed in the same rank as an Alfred or an Alexander. His name no longer appears in the page of history, and our attention is again fixed on the struggle for liberty which, notwithstanding his capture, was still maintained by his brave countrymen against the arms of Rome.

The colony of Camalodunum was no doubt of great use to the victors, as an outpost against the more distant and less peaceful tribes; but another instrument of conquest was brought into action by those prudent conquerors. Out of the spoils taken in the war, several cities were selected and bestowed upon Cogidunus, one of those kings or chieftains, who, wanting the spirit of Caractacus, had early submitted to the

[1] Zonaras, Hist. v. 2.

invaders. "He has remained," says Tacitus, "faithful to us even to the present time, an instance of the soundness of that ancient maxim, by which we have turned even kings into instruments for their country's servitude[k]."

[k] Tacitus, Vita Agr. 12. "Cogidunus, or Cogidumnus, appears undeniably, from his name, to have been originally the Cogi or king of the Dobuni; and from the national appellation of *Rex* or king, which is given him by Tacitus, appears equally to have retained the same sovereignty under the Romans. Nor was this all. He was even invested by the Romans with the sovereignty of some other states, which had probably lost the line of their princes in the prosecution of the war, and which were now subjected to the sceptre of the Dobuni. One of these was, undoubtedly, the Regni of Sussex and Surrey; and the rest must have been the nations that lay betwixt the Dobuni and them, the two intervening tribes of the Attrebates and the Bibroces. And this extended sovereignty, over a part of Warwickshire, over a considerable portion of Buckinghamshire, over nearly all Berkshire, absolutely over all Worcestershire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Surrey and Sussex, Cogidunus retained to the days of Trajan; when not only these counties in particular, but when the whole extent of England and Wales, had been long moulded into the form of a province. This was allowed in the first and second centuries, and at the first modelling of the Roman conquests among us. And thus allowed at first, the British sovereigns must have equally continued through all the period of the Roman government afterwards." Whittaker's Hist. of Manchester, book i. c. 8. pp. 248, 249. Authors, who, like the writer of this passage, string together a number of probabilities, and reason upon them as if they were historical facts, would do well to consider the remark which Mr. Clinton makes in the introduction to his Fasti Romani: "Where all evidence is wanting, it will become us to declare our ignorance, rather than to imitate those who treat a conjecture of what was possible, as if it were a record of what really happened." When the reader reflects, that in the description quoted in the text from Tacitus, he possesses all that has come down to us about Caractacus and Cogidunus, he will think it needless to remark, that the train of argument, in which the learned historian of Manchester indulges in the passage just quoted, is purely the creature of his own fertile imagination.

But, though the star of Caractacus had set in captivity, and his pertinacity to defend the liberties of Britain no longer stood in the way of Ostorius Scapula's progress; that able general was doomed, in his turn, to experience the caprice of fortune. "The course of his arms, which had hitherto been prosperous, began to assume a less decided character of success: whether it was that the removal of the captive king led the Romans to act with less vigour, as deeming the war at an end; or that the natives, in commiseration for their chieftain, were exasperated at his fate, and eager to avenge him. Suddenly, the præfect of the Roman camp, with his legionaries, left to erect fortresses in the country of the Silures, were surrounded by the Britons, and, if they had not been reinforced from the nearest towns and castles, would have been cut off to a man. Even as it was, the præfect, eight centurions, and all the flower of the ranks, were slain on the spot; and not long afterwards a Roman foraging party, and a troop of horse, who went to their assistance, were defeated, and driven off the field. Ostorius detached some light cohorts to rally them, but the attempt would have failed, had not the legions come up in time to take part in the fight. Their weight and solidity restored the battle, which at last began to turn in favour of the Romans. The enemy fled, but with trifling loss, because night came on to cover their retreat.

After this there was incessant fighting, generally of a prædatory character; sometimes the armies would meet in the woods, at other times in the midst of the marshes, according as chance or their own headlong valour directed: many an engagement took place by accident, others again were the result of stratagem and

military manœuvre: many an expedition was contrived in order to revenge some previous defeat, whilst others were undertaken for the sake of plunder: these were sometimes ordered by the generals, but as often were conducted without their knowledge. The Silures were the most pertinacious in their resistance, which was augmented by a remark of the Roman general, "that he would destroy the very name of the Silures out of Britain, in the same way as had been done formerly with the Sigambri, who had been transported to Gaul." These words inflamed the rage of the Silures: they assailed and cut off two cohorts of the auxiliaries, and by a liberal distribution of the captives and other booty, stirred up the other tribes to rèvolt also. In the midst of these events, Ostorius, overcome by the troubles which on every side beset him, departed this life[1]; and the Britons rejoiced at his death, not merely as much as if they had gained a battle, but rather as if the war was entirely at an end."

The relief, however, which the natives experienced from the death of Ostorius, was of short duration: the emperor appointed in his stead Avitus Didius Gallus, who found that he was not likely to enjoy much ease in his government. The Roman cause was declining; the legion commanded by Manlius Valens had recently suffered a defeat; and the enemy magnified their success in the hope that it might discourage the new proprætor. Didius himself was not unwilling to magnify it in the dispatches which he sent to Rome; for, if he should be victorious, his victory would be magnified also in proportion to its difficulty; and if he should fail, an excuse would be at hand in the arduous circumstances which had surrounded him. But, though he

[1] Tacit. Ann. xii. 39.

appeared to acknowledge the emergencies of his situation, he set himself without delay to remedy the mischief, and marched against the Silures, from whom the defeat of his troops had proceeded. That warlike tribe were now defeated in their turn; though supported by Venusius chief of the Brigantes, and the most able general that appeared in Britain since the capture of Caractacus. This man was the husband of Cartismandua, and had been long an ally of the Romans, who protected him and his territories from the vengeance of hostile tribes: but at the time when Didius came to Britain, a division arose between Cartismandua and her husband, which at length burst out into a war between the queen and Venusius. At first the dispute was confined to the parties themselves, until Cartismandua, by stratagem, got the brother and other relations of Venusius into her power, and this inflamed the fury of the enemy, and stimulated them to an outbreak against the Romans, by whom Cartismandua was protected. Ashamed any longer to submit to the rule of a woman, a chosen body of young men invaded her dominions; but the friendly Romans had foreseen and provided for the contingency; a body of their troops met the invaders, and when the conflict had long maintained a doubtful character, the discipline of the legions again prevailed, and the enemy were repulsed. About the same time another Roman legion, commanded by Cæsius Nasica, encountered another British army, and met with similar success. In this manner Didius, an old man, and already burdened with honours, was content to check the enemy by the agency of his officers, without encountering them in the field himself.

These campaigns lasted from the appointment of

Ostorius Scapula in A.D. 50, to the end of the year 58, when the old proprætor Didius, by death or by the command of the emperor, was removed from his government: but in this interval the imperial throne had changed masters, and the weak Claudius[m] given

[m] The character of this singular emperor, a combination of the most opposite qualities, has not yet been treated by writers with the attention which it seems to deserve. It is remarkable that the philosopher Seneca, who was contemporary with Claudius, and suffered death in the reign of Nero, should have caused equal difficulty for future historians to ascertain his real character. By some he has been considered a false and sycophantic courtier, who made pretence of his philosophy to conceal his avarice, ambition, and many other ignoble qualities, whilst by others he is allowed to possess all the realities of that wise and good philosophy, of which he appears to have made the profession. Seneca's writings contain many notices of the emperor Claudius, some expressed in ironical terms, which we are left to interpret in the best way we can. Thus in his work entitled Consolation to Polybius, [chap. 32.] he has the following panegyrical expressions:

"Fortune, withhold thy hand from touching him, shew not thy power in him, save in the direction which thou art taking. Suffer him to heal for a while the woes and distresses of mankind: allow him to restore to its place whatever the madness of the former prince had deranged. O long be the duration of this luminary, which has shone upon the world at a moment, when it was plunged and sunk into an abyss of darkness! Let him appease Germany, and open Britain to our arms: let him renew the triumphs of his father, and add fresh triumphs to the number."

But in his satirical work, entitled, LUDUS DE MORTE CLAUDII CÆSARIS [8] the picture is reversed: "He [Claudius] put to death his son-in-law Lucius Silanus. Why, I would ask? Because he wished his sister, who was a most witty girl, and universally called Venus, to be called Juno instead. It is a trifle that he has a temple in Britain, and the barbarians there adore him as a God."

Again, in the same work occur the following lines:

The Britons he Beyond the sea
And Brigantes with azure shield,

place to a successor, whose imbecility was equal to his predecessors, whilst his brutal cruelty revived in the capital of the empire all the worst memorials of Caligula.

Their arms and lives, Their sons and wives
To Roman chains compelled to yield.
Where Ocean laves His swelling waves,
The Roman axes there are known,
Lament the man, Who only can
Of all our countrymen alone,
Pronounce the laws, Decide a cause,
By hearing either side or none.

CHAP. VIII.

NERO'S CRUEL REIGN—THE BRITONS REVOLT UNDER BOADICEA: CAMALODUNUM, LONDON, AND VERULAM ARE BURNT—SUETONIUS PAULINUS RETURNS FROM ANGLESEY, AND DEFEATS THE BRITONS WITH IMMENSE SLAUGHTER.

THE son of Claudius, that young man, who, with his father, received from the Senate the title of Britannicus, had been marked out as heir to the throne, when Agrippina, Claudius's second wife, paved the way for her own son Nero, by poisoning the hapless youth that was the only obstacle to her ambition. But under all the vicissitudes of human things, crime seldom fails to produce crime; and to fulfil this law, we see children conspire against their parents, and the dearest ties of nature are snapped asunder. The crimes of Nero were so numerous, that the murder of his mother, to whom he owed his elevation to the throne, passes almost without notice. But the influence of such monstrous cruelty in the monarch was not unfelt in all the provinces of the empire: it stirred up the wild elements of avarice and tyranny in a multitude of officials; who expressly followed the example which Nero set them, and in their readiness of gain, were reckless of the sufferings which the pursuit of it entailed on others.

The Britons made less opposition to Claudius than they had made ninety-seven years before to Julius

Cæsar; because, probably, they had learnt in the interval how much superior the Romans were, in almost every particular, to themselves. Civilization not only brings with it enlightenment to the mind, and luxuries for the body, but creates wants, which crave to be gratified, and which effectually prevent the savage from relapsing into the narrow system to which his existence was previously limited.

The government of Ostorius Scapula, and that of his successor Didius, were in general of a military character; but arms and the arts are proverbially connected; and whilst the more warlike Silures disputed inch by inch the possession of their native soil, the Brigantes and other tribes, yielding to the force of circumstances, had submitted to the yoke which was imposed on them, and by degrees adopting Roman manners, sunk into the form of a Roman province.

It is needless to point out the evils which result in all cases from the frequent change of governors, and it is not improbable that to this cause may be in part attributed the tale of havoc and desolation which will now follow. The recital of these bloody wars would have been spared us, if Nero had fulfilled his intention of withdrawing the Roman army, and abandoning Britain; but he was deterred from putting in practice this idea by a sense of the ignominy which would be cast upon him, if he gave up that which it had cost his predecessors so much toil to gain[a]. The old governor of Britain, Avitus Didius, was therefore replaced by Veranius, who like his predecessor was content to limit his military achievements to one or two expeditions against the Silures. But Veranius died before he had been a year in Britain, leaving behind him

[a] Sueton. Vita Neronis, c. 18.

a high reputation for military discipline, and a will full of adulation towards the emperor Nero.

It was no unusual thing, in those days of tyranny on the one hand and of flattery on the other, for a subject to bequeath his property to the reigning prince: the favour of the emperor might thus be secured to the friends of the deceased, who might even derive benefit to himself, if he informed the emperor of his intentions, during the uncertain remainder of his life. But Veranius, having perhaps little else to give, assured the emperor in his last testament, that, if his life had been spared two years longer, the province of Britain would have been added by his arms to the countries which already formed the Roman empire[b].

In the year 61, a furious insurrection broke out in Britain, which threatened to sweep away every trace of the Roman supremacy, and to restore the island to its original independence. The government of the province, since the end of A.D. 59, was in the hands of Suetonius Paulinus, a warlike and skilful general, whom the Roman people were wont to name as the rival of the celebrated Corbulo; and Suetonius, eager to deserve the flattering approbation of his countrymen, speedily found himself in a situation, from which he gained as ample laurels as his rival from the conquest of Armenia. The enterprise from which he hoped to gain reputation to his arms was the conquest of the island of Mona or Anglesey, which, separated from the mainland of Britain by a boisterous though narrow strait, still maintained a sort of independence. The inhabitants of this island were a warlike race, and the annoyance, which the Romans experienced from them, proceeded principally from its being a place of refuge

[b] Tacit. Ann. xiv. 29.

to fugitives and deserters. To invade and conquer this island was the design of Suetonius Paulinus, and to secure the debarkation of his troops upon an unknown coast, and to protect them from any shallows which might be met with, he ordered a number of flat-bottomed vessels to be constructed. In these he placed his foot soldiers, whilst the cavalry were to find their way over by fording the strait, or, if the water was too deep, to swim across, towing their horses.

The expedition, for which these preparations were made, furnished a rude lesson in military tactics to the young Agricola, destined afterwards to reap such an ample harvest of glory from the fields of Britain. The commander, under whom he now for the first time served in the Roman armies, was a persevering and able general, remarkable neither for unnecessary austerity towards his soldiers, nor for feebly relaxing the reins of discipline; and Agricola enjoyed the rare advantage of serving under him rather as a pupil than as a recruit, and was admitted to share the tent and domestic company of his general[c].

Eighteen years after this his first campaign in Britain, Agricola gave his daughter in marriage to the historian Tacitus, who has left us a full account of the invasion of the isle of Anglesey, and of the bloody battle-fields in which his father-in-law had served. The narrative therefore from this point runs in the words of the historian[d].

"The shore of the island was lined with the hostile army, in which were women dressed in dark and dismal garments, with their hair streaming to the wind, bearing torches in their hands, and running like furies

[c] Tacit. Vita Agr. 5.

[d] Tacit. Annal. xiv. 29—39. and Vit. Agricolæ, c. 9.

up and down the ranks. Around stood the Druids, with hands spread to heaven, and uttering dreadful prayers and imprecations. The novelty of the sight struck our soldiers with dismay, so that they stood as if petrified, a mark for the enemy's darts. At length animated by the exhortations of their general, and encouraging one another not to fear an army of women and fanatics, they advanced upon the enemy, bore down all before them, and involved them in their own fires. The troops of the enemy were completely defeated, a garrison placed in the island, and the groves, which had been the consecrated scenes of the most barbarous superstitions, were levelled with the ground. It had been their practice to sacrifice on the altars prisoners taken in war, and to divine the pleasure of their Gods by inspecting human entrails.

"In the midst of these events, news was brought in haste to Suetonius, that a fierce rebellion had broken out through the whole province. The cause of the revolt was as follows.

"Prasutagus was king of the Iceni, and died, leaving immense wealth. In order to place his kingdom and family out of the reach of insult, he left his riches to be divided between his two daughters and the Roman emperor. But this measure produced the very contrary to what he had intended. His kingdom was overrun and pillaged by the Roman centurions, and his house by slaves and menials, as if both were the prize of war. His queen, Boadicea[a], was scourged,

[a] She is called Bonduica by Xiphilinus, a Greek writer, who in the twelfth century abridged the history of Dion Cassius. His account of the campaigns of Claudius agrees in almost every particular with the narrative of Tacitus, but like most later writers he indulges in declamation and rhetorical display.

and her daughters violated. The whole territory of the Iceni was looked upon as lawful plunder, their chiefs stripped of their hereditary estates, and the relations of the deceased king reduced to slavery. These outrages, and the anticipation that worse would follow, now that the country had been reduced to the form of a Roman province, urged the people to take up arms[f].

"They reflected on the miseries attendant on servitude, and when they came to compare their several injuries, they heightened them tenfold by the representation. It was clear that passive submission would but encourage their oppressors to proceed to still greater lengths. Instead of one king, as they had formerly, they had now two, the lieutenant and his procurator; the former of whom exercised his tyranny over their persons, the latter over their goods: whether their governors were in harmony together or at variance, it was alike fatal to the unhappy subjects: the one oppressed them by his troops and his centurions, the other by his insolence and extortion. Nothing was now safe from their avarice or from their licentiousness. In battle it was the bravest or strongest man who carried off the spoil; but here the meanest-spirited and most contemptible of men entered and pillaged

[f] Xiphilinus gives other reasons for the revolt of the Britons: "The cause of the war was the sale of the property, which Claudius had given up to their chiefs, and which Decianus Catus, the praefect of the island, said it was necessary to recal. To this is to be added, that Seneca having lent them, against their will, a thousand myriads of money, in the expectation of benefit thence resulting, afterwards called in the whole sum at once, in a most violent and arbitrary manner." Xiphil. epit. Dionis Cassii, 1—4. This account gives us a vivid picture of the mode in which conquerors, under forms of law and justice, plunder and impose upon their half-civilized tributaries.

29888

their houses, carried away the children, and made the natives enlist in the Roman armies, as if they were ready to die for any thing sooner than their country. If the Britons would but reflect on their own numbers, they would find that the Roman troops who were among them were but a paltry and inconsiderable force. By acting on these views Germany had expelled the invaders, though defended by a river only, and not by the ocean. Their country, their wives and parents, should be so many motives to them to support a war, to which their enemies were urged only by avarice and luxury, and their armies would therefore retire, as the late Julius Cæsar had done, if the Britons would but imitate the bravery of their ancestors, and not be discouraged by the issue of one or two battles; men who are in the midst of misery and suffering are more likely to be energetic, and their energy is more likely to be persevering; moreover, the gods themselves have at last taken compassion on the Britons, and detached the Roman general with his army into another island, whilst themselves have at last got over the most difficult part of the business, namely, deliberating on what steps they should take; and they should remember that it was much more dangerous to be surprised whilst they were still deliberating on their designs, than when they had once taken up arms to put them in execution[*].

"Encouraged by these considerations the Iceni took up arms, and engaged in their revolt the Trinobantes and other states not yet accustomed to subjection, with whom they entered into a solemn and secret compact

[*] This paragraph is extracted from Tacitus's "Life of Agricola," where he touches briefly upon the British campaign, which he has related at greater length in the "Annals."

to recover by arms their lost liberty. Their vengeance was directed mostly against the disbanded veterans who formed the colony planted at Camalodunum; these men had driven the natives from their houses and lands, and bestowed upon them the opprobrious epithets of "slaves" and "captives;" whilst the troops of the legions supported the veterans in their insolence, from a similarity of their habits, and because they hoped hereafter to enjoy the same licence. In addition to this, they looked upon the temple, which the Romans had built and dedicated to the Deified[h] Claudius, as a sort of citadel to keep them in perpetual bondage, and the priests who celebrated religious worship therein as so many harpies who lived upon the substance of the natives. It would be no difficult task, they fancied, to destroy the Roman colony, for it had no fortifications to protect it, an omission, into which the Romans were led by paying more attention to gratify their luxury than to provide for their public safety."

In the midst of this excitement, the tendency of the Romans to believe in prodigies, of which throughout the whole period of their political existence they never dispossessed themselves, was fully manifested by the tales of omens and prognostications which were afterwards said to have happened: but these like all other prophetic intimations arrived at maturity, only after the events which they were supposed to signify had actually happened, when it was easy to attach importance to trivial occurrences, which at other times would have passed without notice.

[h] Divo Claudo. The same word Divus was formerly used by all Christians, and is still used by Roman Catholics, to designate a Saint, as Divus Augustinus, Divus Joannes, &c. It is not the only instance of the adoption of Heathen forms into the Christian religion.

"At Camalodunum the statue of Nero fell to the ground," says Tacitus, "and turned its back where the face had been, as if it fled before the enemy. Women were seen as if mad, singing wild songs, in which they foretold the destruction of the colony. Strange noises were heard in their House of Assembly, and loud howlings in the theatre: in the Estuary of the Thames there was an appearance like that of a sunken town: the sea assumed a blood-red colour, and human forms appeared to be left on the shore by the ebbing tide. All these things were of a nature to encourage the Britons, whilst they overwhelmed the veterans with terror[1].

"At this time Suetonius was far away, and they were compelled to apply to Catus Decianus the procurator for assistance. He sent them only two hundred men, very imperfectly armed, and to these were added a small body of soldiers belonging to the town. The temple of Claudius was used by these troops as a citadel, but their measures were thwarted by those around them who were privy to their revolt: so that they had neither dug a fosse nor cast up a mound to protect them, and the precaution, usual in such cases, of sending away the old men and women, and retaining only the young and active, had been entirely neglected: for they were taken by surprise in time of profound peace, and found themselves suddenly surrounded by the barbarians. Every thing but the temple was plundered and set fire to, and the temple itself, into which the soldiers had fled for refuge, was taken after two days' siege. The Britons, thus victorious, fell upon Petilius Cerealis, lieutenant of the ninth legion, who was advancing to relieve Camalodunum, defeated

[1] These prodigies are repeated almost verbatim by Xiphilinus.

them, and put all the infantry to the sword. The cavalry with the general himself escaped to their camp, and defended themselves within its entrenchments. The procurator Catus, alarmed at this defeat, and fearing to expose himself to the resentment of the natives, whom his own avarice had excited to revolt, fled in haste, and crossed over into Gaul.

"Meanwhile Suetonius, with astonishing resolution, marched through the midst of the enemy to London, which was not yet honoured with the name of a colony, but considerable for the resort of merchants, and for its trade. Here hesitating whether he should make that town the seat of war, he considered how weak the garrison was, and, warned by the check given to Petilius' rashness, resolved to preserve the whole at the hazard of one town. Neither the tears nor lamentations of the people imploring his assistance prevented him from giving the signal for marching, whilst he received into his army such as chose to follow him. All those whom the weakness of sex, infirmities of age, or attachment to the place, induced to stay behind, fell into the enemy's hands. The same calamity befel the municipal town of Verulam; for the barbarians, neglecting the castles and garrisons, plundered the richest and most defenceless places, their principal object being booty. It appears that seventy thousand[k] citizens and allies perished in the abovementioned places." For they never made prisoners to sell or exchange them, according to the practice of war. They regarded nothing but slaughter, hanging, burning, crucifying, as if they wanted to retaliate former punishments, and were eager to quench their thirst for vengeance. Suetonius now saw himself at the head of

[k] Xiphilinus says, 'eighty thousand.'

the fourteenth legion, with the Vexillarii of the twentieth, and the auxiliaries from the nearest countries, amounting in all to near ten thousand regular troops, when he thought it advisable to advance, and come to a battle with all expedition. He made choice of a spot defended by defiles, and closed in the rear by a forest, convinced that no danger was to be apprehended from the enemy, who would make their attack in front, and that an open plain gave no apprehension of ambuscades. The legionaries were drawn up in many deep ranks, the light armed troops disposed around in companies, and the flanks covered with the cavalry. The British troops bounded about in companies and troops, an innumerable multitude, and in such high spirits, that they brought their wives to be witnesses of their victory, and placed them in waggons stationed on the outer circuit of the plain. Boadicea, in a chariot with her daughters, as she came to the respective nations—it being no unusual thing for the British armies to be commanded by women—declared to them that she considered herself not as the descendant of noble ancestors, possessed of the sovereignty and a large revenue, but as one of the community, prepared to avenge the loss of her liberty, the stripes inflicted on her body, and the dishonour done to her daughters, for that the Romans' desires were risen to such a height, that neither their persons, their age, nor their chastity, were safe: that the gods however favoured their just revenge; the legion which attempted an engagement was cut off; the rest concealed in their camp, or providing for their escape; that they would never stand the shouts and clamours of so many thousands, much less their shock and fury; that if they considered the number of forces, or the causes of the

war, they would resolve that day to conquer or die: this was the last resource for her, a woman; let the men, if they pleased, live and be slaves.

"Suetonius also was not silent in this critical conjuncture; but though his chief confidence was in the bravery of his troops, he employed exhortations and entreaties also. He animated them to despise the noisy threats of the barbarians, whose numbers consisted more of women than of young men: such weak unarmed people would soon give way, when they felt the swords and valour of troops, by whom they had been so often defeated; that even in many legions the event of the battle was determined by a few; and that it would augment their glory if so small a body acquired the same renown as a whole army; only he recommended to them to keep their ranks, and, after discharging their javelins, to continue the slaughter with shields and swords, regardless of booty: all being their own when once they had secured the victory.

"The ardour of the soldiers kept pace with the exhortations of the general: so ready were the veterans at their arms, and so tried in many battles, that Suetonius, certain of the event, gave the signal for the charge. At first the legion maintained its ground with great resolution, and made use of the confined space of ground as a rampart. When the enemy came to close quarters, and all their weapons were discharged, they issued out as it were in form of a wedge. The auxiliaries made a like attack, and the cavalry with their lances in rest bore down all before them. The rest took to their heels, but were impeded in their escape by the ring of waggons, which blocked up the way. The soldiers did not spare the lives even of the

women, and stabbed the very beasts; thus adding to the heaps of slain. The glory of that day may rank with the most famous ancient victories; for some affirm that no less than 80,000 Britons fell in this battle. About 400 of our soldiers were killed, and about the same number wounded.

"Boadicea put an end to her life by poison; and Pœnius Posthumus, the camp-marshal of the second legion, hearing of the success of the fourteenth and twentieth, unable to support the reflection of having deprived his legion of the same renown, and disobeyed the general's orders contrary to the laws of war, threw himself on his sword. The army being now all collected together, was kept in the field in tents to put an end to the war. The emperor augmented the troops with 2000 legionaries, eight cohorts of auxiliaries, and 1000 horse from Germany. On their arrival, the ninth legion was recruited. The cohorts and other troops were placed in new winter quarters, and all the nations, whose inclinations were wavering or hostile, were ravaged by fire and sword. But the enemy suffered most from famine, for want of attention to the sowing of corn; for whilst they were solely intent on prosecuting the war, they reckoned on our provisions; and these haughty people were slow in their advances to peace, because Julius Classicianus, who succeeded Catus, and disagreed with Suetonius, impeded the public interest by his private quarrels, and gave out that they must wait for a new general, who would treat those who submitted with lenity, without the resentment of an enemy or the haughtiness of a conqueror. At the same time he wrote to Rome, that there was no prospect of an end of the war, unless a successor was

appointed to Suetonius, whose miscarriages he ascribed to his ill conduct, and his good success to the fortune of the state.

"Polycletus therefore, one of the emperor's freedmen, was sent to enquire into the affairs of Britain, for Nero flattered himself that his authority would not only restore harmony between the lieutenant and the procurator, but sooth the minds of the natives, and reestablish peace in the island. Polycletus crossed the sea with an immense train of followers, which encumbered Italy and Gaul, and created no small alarm to our soldiers. But the enemy, flushed as they were with liberty, and strangers to the power which men sometimes possess at courts, who have once been slaves, made a jest of such an agent, and were astonished at the respect which the army with their victorious general paid him. His report however to the emperor was favourable: Suetonius was continued in the command, until, upon some ships being run ashore and the crews lost, he was ordered, as if the war still continued, to resign the army to Petronius Turpilianus, who had just given up the consulship. Petronius was a more easy-tempered man, less acquainted with the faults of the enemy, and therefore more ready to overlook and forgive them, than Suetonius Paulinus."

But our narrative must now leave Britain, and follow the course of events at Rome, that centre of action, whose influence was felt to the most distant province of the empire.

CHAP. IX.

THE EMPERORS GALBA, OTHO, VITELLIUS.—PETRONIUS TURPILIANUS, TREBELLIUS MAXIMUS, AND VETTIUS BOLANUS, GOVERNORS OF BRITAIN.

AFTER fourteen years of tyranny, the emperor Nero was no less eager to gratify all the worst passions of human nature than he had been at the beginning of his reign: and, strange to say, the Roman people had not yet learnt to forget that the miscreant, who governed them, was the last descendant of the Cæsars; for even when the intentions of the army were fully known, and it was manifest that the reign of Nero was at an end, he was suffered to depart from Rome, and in the privacy of his country-seat to inflict on himself that death which his crimes had so fully merited, but which none of the people of Rome, whom he had so often outraged, seemed disposed to administer.

Galba[a], an old senator, and little qualified to sit on a throne, which would now hardly have been secure for Augustus, reigned seven months, from June 9, A.D. 68, to Jan. 15, A.D. 69[b]. His approach to

[a] After the death of Caligula, Galba might have been his successor on the throne; but he preferred the tranquillity of private life, and lost the imperial dignity for that time; but in exchange for this, he gained the favour of Claudius, and was held by him in such esteem, that the British expedition was delayed for a short time, in consequence of Galba's trifling illness. SUETON. GAL. 7.

[b] See Clinton's Fasti Romani, and the authorities there quoted.

Rome was stained by the blood of two eminent Romans, Cingonius Varro, consul elect, and Petronius Turpilianus, who had been the successor of Suetonius Paulinus in the government of Britain. Petronius was accused of no crime, but as a general who had adhered to the cause of Nero, and therefore perhaps dangerous, he was doomed to death; and as he was punished without a trial, he was deemed to have died innocent: but where there is no ground for an accusation, and the forms of justice would have been a mockery, it is a consolation to a brave man to know, that he owes his fate to the arbitrary dictates of a brutal tyrant, rather than to the solemn award of his fellow citizens.

In his administration of Britain, Turpilianus had shewn himself possessed of qualities that rendered him well suited to the office which he filled. The fierce tide of rebellion, which Suetonius so successfully stemmed at its height, had not entirely subsided, and the minds of the natives were still susceptible of agitation. The proprætor however, by his mild and gentle conduct, soothed them into submission; and as they were equally indisposed as he to act on the side of aggression, the government of Turpilianus passed away without bloodshed: but this, according to the harsh and selfish maxim of the Romans, was a stain upon the character of a general, and it is the expression of Tacitus, that the proprætor assumed the guise of a peace-maker to cover the ignoble indolence of his natural disposition. Thus, some time before the death of Nero, Petronius Turpilianus resigned his province to his successor Trebellius Maximus.

But Trebellius was, in the words of the same writer, still more inactive than Petronius; he was little versed in the affairs of a camp, and ruled his province with

moderation and affability. History relates that the barbarians in Britain had accustomed themselves to vices which exhibited an attractive exterior, and that the remissness with which the Roman general shewed in neglecting all views of conquest, derived some excuse from the civil wars which disturbed the empire. Three emperors, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, reigned in the latter part of the year 68, and the beginning of 69, public schemes of aggrandisement in Britain were suspended, and the soldiers, no longer occupied in military expeditions, spent their days in indolence. The cause of their inactivity was the intervening ocean, which has so often saved Britain, in spite of the infatuation or ambition of its rulers, from suffering by the wars and convulsions which have disturbed the continent of Europe. That the Roman legions quartered in our island had learnt, by the frequency of their wars against the natives, to reserve for them the enmity which elsewhere was directed against their fellow-subjects, might furnish Tacitus with a mode of finishing a well-rounded period, but cannot be received as an explanation of the calm which Britain at this time enjoyed. No where in the whole empire did the legions conduct themselves with greater moderation during the whole of those disturbed times; and every interval of peace, however short, helps to consolidate over a newly-acquired territory the chains of conquest: but the proprætor's own conduct was not in all points without reproach. His avarice and meanness rendered him an object of contempt and hatred to his soldiers, a circumstance, we may observe, which might have produced much good to the natives, by destroying the unity between the leader and his troops, which elsewhere often suggested bold and seditious enter-

prizes. The aversion of the soldiers for their general was heightened by Roscius Cœlius, the lieutenant of the twentieth legion, who had an old grudge against Trebellius, to which he now during the . . . . . civil arms ventured to give utterance. The general laid the blame of the sedition and neglect of discipline on Cœlius, who in turn charged Trebellius with defrauding and impoverishing his soldiers. These disgraceful quarrels brought both the commanders into utter contempt with their men. Their differences rose to such a height, that the auxiliary troops cried shame upon them, and the whole army, both cavalry and infantry, taking part with Cœlius, the governor, deserted by every body, abandoned Britain, and made the best of his way to the court of Vitellius.

After his departure, the lieutenants of the different legions took the government into their own hand, and managed it between them; but Cœlius, by his insolent and overbearing manner, possessed more influence than the others in the administration of the province[a].

This state of things was, however, of no long continuance. The contest for empire lay principally between the parties of Galba and Vitellius, for Otho, though he is by courtesy placed between his two rivals in the order of the Roman emperors, was speedily defeated and slain by Vitellius on the plains of Bebriacum. The accession of the British Proprætor Trebellius, seems to have been of no great advantage to the cause of Vitellius; for he came unaccompanied by followers; but a large number of men from Britain had already joined the different candidates for empire in the civil war which was raging between the parties. Suetonius Paulinus, with the fourteenth legion, which had

[a] Tacit. Hist. i. 59—61.

borne with him their share of danger and honour in Britain, had joined the side of Otho[b]. Vitellius also had drawn eight thousand soldiers[c] from our island; which, though in all ages seated aloof from continental wars, was thus early appreciated as a nursery from which men might be enlisted to feed the wars which ravaged the continent.

A body of men had been fetched from Britain in the reign of Nero; and when Vitellius, by the victory at Bebriacum, found himself apparently secure of the throne, many parts of Europe suffered from the bands of soldiers belonging to the vanquished army, which roamed over it, and ravaged it in all directions. Amongst others, the fourteenth legion loudly asserted that "they were still unconquered, that it was only the inferior troops who had recoiled at Bebriacum, the legionaries were unsubdued[d]!"

A fearful instance of military license occurred at Turin. A Batavian soldier charged an artisan with imposing upon him. A soldier of the legions took the part of the mechanic, at whose house he lodged: other soldiers joined in the quarrel which ensued, until from words they came to blows; and a fierce battle was about to begin; when two prætorian cohorts espoused the part of the legionaries, who belonged mostly to the fourteenth, and awed the Batavians into submission. But Vitellius, approving the conduct of the Batavians, united them to his own body guard, and ordered the legion to cross beyond the Alps by a circuitous route to avoid Vienne, where there were also apprehensions of a tumult. When night came on, the legionaries began their march, leaving their fires

[b] Tacit. Hist. ii. 31, 32.
[c] Tacit. Hist. ii. 57.
[d] Tacit. Hist. ii. 65, 66.

burning, by which part of Turin was burnt to the ground: but this calamity attracted little notice, amid the greater scenes of havoc and destruction by which it was eclipsed. When the legion descended the Alps on the other side, the most daring of the soldiers marched to Vienne; but, as no one seconded their movement, tranquillity was restored.

By these and similar causes, the mind of Vitellius was much harassed, and to relieve the country from its oppressors and himself from farther alarm, the roving bands of soldiers, including the fourteenth legion, were again transported into Britain, leaving for history to record the lesson which perhaps mankind will still refuse to learn or to profit by, how nearly connected is human glory with human ignominy. The same corps, which earned by the defeat of Boadicea unfading laurels, and the loudest panegyrics of their countrymen, was within eight years sent back in dishonour to the remote scene of their triumphs by their fellow-subjects, to whom they had become objects of alarm.

The reign of Vitellius was almost as short as that of his two predecessors: but he did not neglect to appoint a successor to Trebellius in Britain. The choice fell on Vettius Bolanus[c], one of the immediate attendants of the emperor; and it is equally difficult to determine the character of his administration as in the case of his three immediate predecessors. "It was too mild," says Tacitus, "for so fierce a province: and Agricola, who was still serving in Britain, checked the ardour of his own martial disposition, that he might not be suspected of disobedience or of disaffection towards his commander-in-chief." The government of Bolanus was similar to that of his predecessors in its brevity

[c] Tacit. Hist. ii. 65, 66.

also; for the civil wars were not yet ended, and Vitellius was about to be cast from the throne by a more able competitor, who had long by his virtues and merits been laying a foundation for the greatness of his family.

Flavius Vespasianus, and his son Titus, had long been known to the Roman armies, and were favourites with all military men throughout the empire. Influenced no doubt by ambition and a consciousness of superiority to Vitellius, Vespasian did not suffer the new sovereign to remain long at peace. He at once struck for the throne, and his partisans dispatched emissaries to invite the Roman armies to answer to the appeal. Messengers crossed over to Britain, others hastened into Spain, the one to stir up the fourteenth legion stationed in our island, the other to incite the soldiers of the first legion, with which the peninsula was garrisoned, to espouse their part. Both these corps had sided with Otho, and both still harboured enmity to Vitellius. By the friends of the emperor also, levies were made in Germany, Spain, and Britain, but slowly and ineffectually, for Vitellius wished, if possible, to conceal from himself the danger which menaced him. On the other hand, the governors of provinces had already learnt to hesitate, and to look sharply round them at the appearance of things, when summoned by their imperial masters to assist them in their repeated contests for sovereignty: hence whilst other governors wrote back to Rome such answers as the peculiar circumstances suggested, Bolanus excused himself from immediately obeying the summons of Vitellius by the unquiet and intractable nature of the people which he governed[1].

Meanwhile, Cæcina occupied Cremona for Vitellius,

[1] Tacit. Hist. ii. 97.

and we find in his train a portion of the fourteenth legion, the vexillarii, as they were termed, who had not been sent back with the legionaries into Britain. A large number of men from three other British legions were with Cæcina, partly no doubt Roman soldiers from the first, and partly native Britons, who had enlisted in the Roman armies[g]. But the partisans of Vespasian were too rapid for Vitellius, whose character, since his accession to the purple, had taken a most singularly indolent turn. Whilst still a subject, he seemed to possess talents if not virtues, which enabled him, as was shewn by the result, to gain the throne; but no sooner was he seated thereon, than he became indolent, debauched, and gluttonous to an extraordinary degree. The revolt, as it was called, of Vespasian, seemed to paralyse the movements of Vitellius, though a large portion of the Roman army were supposed to be still in his interests, and as yet so uncertain which side to take, that they caused even the adherents of Vespasian to pause. Some of the revolted councillors advised that the war should be protracted, and they particularly spoke highly of the German legions, and of the flower of the British troops, who were advancing under the banners of Vitellius. In reply to these arguments, it was urged by those who advised speedy measures, that "delay would be their ruin, and the very salvation of Vitellius, whose army, plunged for the moment into a vortex of dissipation and enervated by enjoyment, since the victory over Otho, would resume its wonted vigour, if time was allowed them, and that Germany was close at hand with reinforcements, and Britain separated by a narrow strait[h]. Amid these deliberations, the Romans in Britain declared with one voice for Vespasian, whose merits as

[g] Tacit. Hist. ii. 100. [h] Tacit. Hist. iii. 1, 2.

a soldier they had all witnessed, and whose amiability of character most of them had experienced. Officers and private men eagerly espoused his cause, and were the first to raise that cry in his favour, which in an incredibly short space of time was echoed by all Europe.

But whilst these events divided the interests and distracted the attention of the Romans, they were again brought to the verge of losing their power in Britain by the pertinacity of the natives. The discord between Cartismandua, queen of the Brigantes, and her husband Venusius, still continued: and the queen, not content with the haughtiness which she had exhibited towards her husband as well as to others, since the capture of Caractacus, at last set aside Venusius altogether, and took his armour-bearer, Vellocatus, to be the partner of her bed and throne. The scandal of this act roused even the other members of the royal family. Public opinion was in favour of the injured husband; but the intruder was supported by the love and arbitrary power of the queen. Venusius assailed her with all the auxiliary troops he could procure, in addition to the revolted Brigantes, and Cartismandua was brought into a situation of great danger. She was obliged to ask assistance from the Romans, and a body of men, consisting both of foot and horse, was dispatched to her succour. After several battles, they rescued the queen from her perilous position, but the whole kingdom remained in the power of Venusius: whilst the Romans found themselves with a fresh war upon their hands, and their possession of Britain was again in almost as critical a state as in the days of Ostorius Scapula, or Suetonius Paulinus[1].

Such was the progress of British affairs during the

[1] Tacit. Hist. iii. 44, 45.

reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. The accession of Vespasian to the imperial throne produced a change beneficial to his own subjects, but fatal to the liberties of Britain.

CHAP. X.

THE REIGNS OF VESPASIAN, TITUS, AND DOMITIAN—PETILIUS CEREALIS, JULIUS FRONTINUS, AND JULIUS AGRICOLA, PROPRÆTORS OF BRITAIN—WARS OF AGRICOLA, DEFEAT OF GALGACUS, AND THE CALEDONIANS—FINAL SETTLEMENT OF THE ROMAN PROVINCE IN BRITAIN.

THE governors of our island, whilst it was slowly yielding to the Roman arms, and gradually merging in their empire, had little time for rest or enjoyment, which was incompatible with the unruly conduct of the natives. Neither do they appear to have received from their countrymen a due share of honours or emolument for their services in reducing so refractory a province to submission. Few of them were suffered to remain more than two years, and many of them but a few months, in office. The accession of Vespasian to the empire was soon followed by a change in the proprætorship. The short administration of Vettius Bolanus was marked by no military expedition against the enemy, and the conduct of the legions was not free from occasional disorder and licentiousness. The governor, unstained by acts of harshness and oppression, was little disposed to tighten the bands of discipline, so that what he lost in authority, was made up for by the attachment of his soldiers*.

His successor was Petilius Cerealis, the same whose legion had been cut to pieces on their march to relieve

* Tacit. Vit. Agric. 20.

Camalodunum[b]. His favourite officer was Julius Agricola, who commanded the twentieth legion. To this post he had been appointed, whilst Vettius Bolanus was still proprætor, by Mucianus, the principal minister of Vespasian. The twentieth legion was slow to take the oath of allegiance to the new emperor, and its late commander was suspected of seditious intentions. To bring them to a sense of their duty was the task assigned to Agricola, and his endeavours were crowned with success; for he chose to appear ignorant of their disaffection, and by giving them credit for being obedient and well conducted, he speedily brought them to become so in reality[c].

A virtuous friendship subsisted between Agricola and the new proprætor. Cerealis shared with Agricola all the toils and dangers of the campaign; but, what was more uncommon, he shared with him its honours also: not unfrequently would he divide the army, and try the talents of his friend, by giving him a separate command. The result justified the confidence of the general; and when Agricola's success had thus warranted it, a larger number of men was given, and Agricola in this manner increased his military experience by expeditions against an enemy, over whom he was destined soon to acquire a great and lasting triumph. Meanwhile, as he was subordinate in command, the moderation of the officer equalled his skill as a commander: the credit of all his exploits was referred to the source from which his authority was derived; and as his superior officer was liberal in giving him the applause which he deserved, Agricola had already gained a reputation which pointed him out

[b] See page 104. [c] Tacit. Vit. Agric. 7.

as a fit instrument for discharging those services which he afterwards rendered to the state.

The acts of Petilius Cerealis were limited to a few expeditions against the Brigantes, the largest of the British tribes, and still in a disturbed state, since the discord between Cartismandua and Venusius. The proprætor defeated their troops, and brought part of their country to submission: the rest was still in a state of war, when Cerealis was recalled[d], leaving behind him a high opinion of what he was qualified to do rather than of what he had done. To him succeeded Julius Frontinus, who filled without disgracing it the place to which he had been appointed; and this was the more creditable to him, as he had to sustain a comparison with his predecessor. Under his administration the valiant tribe of the Silures was reduced to submission, an exploit of no small difficulty; for the mountain-fastnesses of Wales, where the Silures dwelt, have always presented as much opposition to an invader as the bravery of the inhabitants.

Such are the accounts which history has left to us of the progress of the Roman armies in Britain down to A.D. 78, one hundred and thirty-three years after the first attempt of Julius Cæsar, and thirty-five years after its reputed conquest by Claudius. And yet at the period to which we have arrived, the subjection of the island was incomplete. Nothing can more strongly shew the stubborn spirit of the natives than their protracted resistance to the invaders. Battle after battle had been lost, but many of their tribes were still unsubdued: and it is evident that some master-mind was still wanting to place the Roman power on

[d] Joseph. B. Jud. vii. 4.

the same footing which it occupied in the other kingdoms that formed their empire.

Such a leader at last appeared in the famous Agricola. A large portion of his early life had passed in Britain; it was here that his military reputation had been gained, and his military genius formed. His private character also was so good, that he deserved to be spoken of with praise even by the people, whom he conquered: and if a gallery was to be adorned with the likenesses or statues of British worthies, it would be by no means inconsistent or inappropriate to place that of Agricola among them, though his arms were directed against our own countrymen. The affectionate care of his son-in-law, the historian Tacitus, has left us an account of his life, which has given pleasure and instruction to all succeeding generations. His exploits in Britain embrace the period of seven years, between the recal of Frontinus in A.D. 78, and the end of the year A.D. 84.

The summer of the year 78* was more than half passed away, when Agricola crossed over to assume the government of Britain. The Roman troops were indulging in ease and security, supposing that the season for action was past, and the Britons were looking out for an opportunity to strike a blow. Not long before his arrival, the Ordovices had almost entirely destroyed a troop of cavalry, quartered in their territories: by this first flush of success, the province was excited to a great degree, and all who wished for war, praised the example of the Ordovices, or waited to see how the new lieutenant would act.

The summer was far advanced, large numbers of the

* The rest of this chapter is little more than a paraphrase of Tacitus.

troops dispersed throughout the province, and there was every confidence in the minds of the soldiers that war would not be resumed that year. All this caused delay, and opposed much difficulty to the renewal of the campaign: some also thought it the wisest plan to keep an attentive eye on those parts of the country which were suspected: but Agricola determined at once to anticipate their designs, and to meet the danger half way. For this purpose he assembled the legions, together with a small number of the auxiliaries, and because the Ordovices would not come down to meet him in a fair field, he led his army up into the mountains against them, that by this boldness he might inspire the rest with equal courage in a similar emergency. Almost all the tribe were put to the sword, for Agricola knew that it was necessary to strike a severe blow at first, if he wished the result of the campaign to be successful. His next measure was to subdue the isle of Mona or Anglesey, where Paulinus was carrying on the war, when he was recalled by the news that all Britain was in rebellion. But to accomplish this design, it was necessary to have vessels, which in the uncertainty of Agricola's plans, had not been provided. But the skill and perseverance of the general enabled him to surmount this difficulty. Certain of the auxiliary troops, who were acquainted with the fords, and had in their own country been used to swimming on horseback, were selected, and ordered to put aside their knapsacks and baggage. When all was ready, they plunged into the water so suddenly, that the enemy, who had expected nothing else than a whole fleet of ships to transport the army, were terrified at the sight, and took to flight, convinced that it was useless to oppose troops who came to battle in that

manner, without being deterred by any obstacle. In this way all resistance being hopeless, peace was asked, and the island was surrendered to the Romans. This success added new honours to Agricola, whose praises were in every body's mouth, for having successfully finished a most dangerous expedition at a season of the year, which other generals devote to ease and activity, and this too, when he was but just arrived from Rome to enter upon his government. But the moderation of Agricola was as great as his talents and his success: he thought it not worthy of the name of victory to have punished the audacity of the conquered Britons, and to have checked their rebellion. In accordance with this modesty of character, the letters which he dispatched to Rome were not wreathed in laurels, as those of other victorious generals were; and forbearance was in this case rewarded, for his praises were sounded infinitely louder than before, and from his silence about achievements which other men would have been proud of, the Roman people formed most extravagant expectations of the future.

By this time he had some insight into the character and temper of those whom he governed, and had seen abundant instances of the folly of ruling by the sword, unless the public measures are characterized by equity and justice. In the task of reformation therefore he began with reforming his own household, which many persons find as hard a task as to govern a province. In the first place he allowed no public business to be transacted by the agency of freedmen or slaves, and admitted none of his soldiers to favour from private motives, or from the interest or recommendations of the centurions, but reposed trust and confidence wherever he discerned merit. Nothing passed in the

army without his knowledge, though he forbore to meddle in many things. If his men committed trifling faults, he forgave them at once, but serious offences were severely punished. He delighted to see them repentant rather than to see them punished; and was more desirous to promote to charges and appointments such men as would not be guilty of faults, than to condemn them when they had offended. To lighten, as much as possible, the necessary exaction of forage and of tribute, he laid the public burdens equally on all, abolishing all such offices as were invented for profit only, and were submitted to more reluctantly than the tribute itself.

These abuses were all reformed by Agricola in the first year of his administration, and thus his peaceful labours produced happiness to those under him, as his military campaigns had before given them security. Six months had scarcely elapsed since he had entered on the duties of his office, and in that short period things in Britain were entirely changed, and began to assume a brighter and settled aspect.

The year 79 brought with it a renewal of labours and of triumph. The summer, which was then the only time for military expeditions, had hardly begun, when Agricola was already busy: he assembled his men, bestowed reward and censure on all, where each was merited, marked out with his own hand the military camp, and reconnoitred with his own eyes the forests and estuaries which might impede the march of his troops, or furnish a place of ambush to the enemy. The Britons meanwhile had no respite from his vigilance, but suffered by sudden inroads and unforeseen devastations of their territory. When by these alarms he had driven them to extremities, he

withdrew his troops, and by extraordinary lenity endeavoured to tempt them to make peace. This conduct was in many cases successful: several of the tribes, which to that day had kept aloof, and maintained their independence, laid aside all further thoughts of war, gave hostages for their future good behaviour, and submitted to have their towns garrisoned by the Romans.

Whilst things were in this flourishing condition, the emperor Vespasian died on the 25th of June, 79, and the crisis, so dangerous in general to an absolute monarchy not yet settled upon an hereditary basis, passed off in tranquillity by the peaceful accession of Vespasian's son Titus, a man less noted perhaps for views of wary and settled prudence, but on the whole a no less great and virtuous character than his father. The laudable career of Agricola therefore suffered no interruption from the interference of a meddling successor to the throne, and the latter part of the year passed away in a continuance of the same peaceful arts which always occupied Agricola during the period of military inactivity. He now saw the necessity of adopting some line of policy, by which the fierce passions of the Britons might be weaned from the unsettled state of war and tumult to which they were habituated, and led to adopt the pursuits of peace and the refinements of civilization. This end, he saw, could only be obtained by giving them a relish for the fine arts, and a taste for elegant pleasures. These views he took care to disseminate in private conversation with his officers, and to inculcate on public occasions. He encouraged them to erect temples for public worship, market-places for the transaction of business, and private houses of a more costly and

luxurious construction than had yet been seen in Britain. Those who entered readily into these views, and engaged in the erection of such edifices, met with his hearty commendation; and those who neglected to follow his instructions, found themselves the objects of his well-deserved censure. Thus emulation was created in the province, and it produced generally the effect of obligation.

Whilst Agricola thus directed his attention to promote the welfare of all classes of his subjects, the chiefs were made more especially the objects of his paternal care: he had their sons instructed in the liberal arts, and was soon rewarded for his pains by the discovery, as he himself expressed it, that the genius of the Britons was preferable to the acquirements of the Gauls; and in a very short time these apt scholars, who a few years before had treated with contempt the language of their conquerors, and would not learn it, began to pay attention to the Roman oratory, and to study elocution. A taste soon began to prevail for the Roman dress also, and the toga came into general use among them. By degrees they adopted all the Roman manners: the use of the bath was introduced with other customs, porticos rose to ornament the fronts of their houses, and to yield their welcome covering from the summer's sun and from the winter's cold: the interiors were decorated with splendid tables, and other costly furniture. And it would have been well for them if their imitation had been confined to such things as these: but we are credibly informed, that the provincials soon adopted the worst vices also of their new masters; for vices entered largely at that time into the Roman civilization, and as an instrument of slavery, helped to accomplish the purpose for which they were intended—to enervate the minds of the

Britons, and deprive them of every wish for independence, or hope of liberty!

And these occupations the second year of Agricola's administration wore away, and the third spring, of the year A.D. 80, advanced, bringing with it a new series of expeditions, campaigns, and battles, by which the frontiers of the Roman province were extended, and the aboriginal tribes driven still further towards the north. The excursions of the army extended as far as the estuary of the Tay, and spread such a panic among the enemy, that they seldom or ever dared to come to an engagement, even though the Roman troops suffered greatly from the severity of the weather. It is, however, a painful task to record the unpitying progress which a powerful people like the Romans, provided with every thing that art or science could furnish, thus made against an inferior race, who had nothing but their valour to present to the panoply of their enemies, nothing but their half-naked bodies to be the bulwark of their wives' and children's and country's freedom. Such has been too often the melancholy tale which history has to tell us; though it is not always the province of history to record such bright virtues and humanizing influences as those which followed close upon the battle-fields of Agricola!

His soldiers availed themselves of the pause allowed them by the terror of the enemy to erect fortresses all over the country, and those who were experienced in such matters remarked, that they had never known a general who made a more discreet choice of his ground: no castle built by Agricola was ever taken by the enemy, or surrendered to them through fear, or by capitulation. These fortresses were supplied with fresh troops every year, so that they were proof against a siege however

long, and were always in a condition to send out troops and make inroads on the enemy. Thus the winter passed away in perfect security: the castles were built in such a way as to communicate, and so make mutual defence; this disappointed the enemy, and drove them to despair; for they had hitherto been used to regain in the winter the ground which they lost in the summer; and now they found themselves hard pressed at all seasons of the year alike. Agricola communicated the honour of these successes to all his soldiers with favour or reserve: every officer of every rank, superior or subaltern, præfect or centurion, found in their general a faithful witness of their bravery. By some indeed he was thought a little too severe in his censures; for, as his behaviour was most mild and courteous to all who well conducted themselves, so he was severe and perhaps harsh towards those who neglected their duty; but he made it his rule never to give way to anger and sudden passion. His manner also was always free and open; his silence never proceeded from reserve, so that no one ever entertained fears from it, or was left in uncertainty: for he would always rather speak plainly at once, with the risk of giving offence, than secretly nourish resentment in his breast.

The fourth campaign [A.D. 81.] produced no new accession of territory to the Roman province, but was spent in securing the country acquired the year before; though the valour and spirit of the army were still so high, that the least impulse from their leader would, we are assured, have carried them to the furthest shores of Britain. Between the two friths of Clota and Bodotria, [the Clyde and Forth,] which run up from the oceans on the opposite sides of Britain, the land is contracted to an interval of little more than forty miles:

a chain of fortresses was here built to cut off all communication between the north and south; and thus those of the Britons who still preserved their independence among the northern Highlands, were confined, as it were, in another island. In strengthening these frontier-garrisons, and occupying the bays and inlets which are connected with them on the east and west, the year 81 glided fast away: but it removed also from his earthly career the emperor Titus, whose death occurred on the fifteenth of September, and left the throne to the fearful possession of his brother Domitian. The change of emperors, however, produced no immediate change in Britain. Agricola was tacitly confirmed in the government of a province, where his successes had procured to Titus for the fifteenth time the salutation of *Imperator!*

The fifth year opened with an enterprise of a different character from any hitherto undertaken in Britain. The hardy inhabitants of the north, in the fastnesses of their mountain-district, presented unusual obstacles to the advance of the victorious legions: but the sea was still open to Agricola, and he determined now to avail himself of his navy to reconnoitre and perhaps conquer the northern tribes. In this way also he perhaps hoped to solve a long agitated question, whether the new world which his great predecessor Julius Cæsar had first visited, was really an island, or joined by some unknown tract of land to the northern countries of Europe. In pursuit of these schemes, his fleet was got ready, and his troops were wafted with little trouble, and with no opposition, among tribes which they had not hitherto met with. Several of these people were reduced to submission, and a Roman garrison placed far off to the west, where the coast of

Scotland looks towards Ireland, not from any apprehension of danger from that distant and unknown country, but merely as a means of pushing the Roman conquests still further, and perhaps of conquering Ireland itself: for the position of that island appeared advantageous for opening a commerce with Spain and the western coasts of Gaul; in addition to which it was supposed more accessible to the ships of those times, than Britain, and had long been visited and favourably spoken of by merchants. Moreover, one of the petty princes of the island, driven from his home by a civil war, had taken refuge and received protection from Agricola, who detained him under a shew of friendship until he could turn the opportunity to advantage. But the occasion, when the refugee prince might be of service, never arrived: other matters called aside the attention of Agricola from the meditated scheme of adding Ireland to the Roman empire, though his views must be admitted to have been sound: for, as he said afterwards to his son-in-law, "The island might be subdued and guarded by one legion with a few auxiliaries, and would have been a warning to the northern British tribes, when every vestige of liberty was removed out of their sight." By the course of events, Ireland still remained in possession of independence more than a thousand years, until another exiled prince arrived in Britain, at a moment more favourable for finding an invader[f] and a conqueror for his native country.

In the beginning of the year 83, which was the sixth year of Agricola's government, the war against the Northern Britons assumed a twofold nature, as it was conducted partly by land, and partly by sea. The cause of this was still the mountainous character of the

[f] Henry II. of England.

country, which gave the natives many facilities for surprising the Roman army on its march. The campaign was this year carried into the regions beyond the Friths of Forth and Clyde; and the general took care to have his fleet at no great distance from the camp, that he might avail himself of its use in a country so intersected by rivers and estuaries. In consequence of this arrangement, the camp afforded a novel sight: sailors and soldiers there met, often to relate over their cups and magnify their several exploits and successes against the common enemy, and by these means a degree of alacrity and cheerfulness was kept up in the camp, which inspirited the men to encounter the real toils and dangers of a war of invasion in a difficult country, and opposed by a brave and determined enemy.

Meanwhile, the same cause which added confidence to the Romans, tended to depress the Britons; for Agricola learnt from his prisoners that the sight of the fleet created astonishment among them; as if the sea, their last resource in case of a defeat, was now taken from them. But the brave inhabitants of Caledonia did not suffer their surprise to deprive them of the power of acting: they applied themselves vigorously to remedy their disasters, and to make head against the invaders. The suddenness with which they rallied, gave some little apprehension to the Romans; and report, as often is the case in such circumstances, magnified their numbers and their preparations. It was said in the Roman camp, that the enemy had attacked certain of the border fortresses; and some, whose hearts failed them, advised, under the plea of prudence, that they should retire voluntarily beyond the Frith of Forth, rather than be driven back. In the mean time Agricola received intelligence that his troops would be

soon assailed by the enemy in large numbers and in several bodies at once. To prevent the possibility of his army being surrounded, he divided it into three columns, and led them on in parallel marches against the enemy. The Britons, baffled by this movement, changed their plans also, and uniting into one body, fell upon the ninth legion, which was the weakest, under the cover of the night, and forced the outports, killing the guards amid the darkness and the confusion. A fierce battle ensued within the lines, when Agricola, informed by his scouts of the enemy's motions, and following close upon their heels, ordered his light horse and infantry to set up a shout, and charge the enemy in the rear. This created a diversion in favour of those who were within, and presently afterwards the dawn of day revealed to the Britons the victorious eagles of the Romans, against which they had so often fought and bled in vain. They recoiled in alarm from the attack, and the Romans, recovering from their sudden panic, and sure of safety, fought only to make their victory the more glorious. They charged the enemy on both sides, and a bloody battle followed, especially in the narrow outlets of the camp. Both divisions of the army fought the harder from emulation of each other: the one, eager to have the credit of having saved their comrades; the other, anxious to have it thought that they did not need assistance. Their combined exertions at length put the enemy to the rout, and the field remained their own, strewed with the corpses of the slain! The remnant owed their safety to the woods and marshes, those strongholds of Ancient Britain, which had so often saved them from slaughter.

The renewed energy, which this victory gave to the Roman soldiers, was such as may be imagined: they

called on their general to lead them on into the country of the Caledonians, that they might exterminate the only enemy who now remained, and put an end to the war on the extreme verge of the island. Even those, who a short time before had given advice which seemed to flow from cowardice under the garb of prudence, after this victory abandoned all ideas of caution or circumspection, and became forward and boastful. Such is always the state of things in military movements. Every one claims a share in the honours of success; but, if the Romans had been defeated, all the blame would have rested on Agricola.

Notwithstanding this serious defeat, however, the brave Britons were not disheartened; they imputed their defeat to the skill of the Roman leader, aided by the good fortune which brought him so opportunely to the rescue of the legion. They did not yet despair of success, but continued to arm all who were of a fit age to serve in their ranks, to lodge their wives and children in places of security, and to bind together the different tribes, by public meetings and solemn sacrifices, to make another combined exertion in the common cause. In the mean time, the opposite armies no longer came into contact, and a brief cessation of arms followed.

In the course of the same summer, a bold and extraordinary exploit was performed by one of the cohorts which had been raised among the Usipii, a tribe of Germany. It was the custom of the Romans to place a centurion with a few native Romans in every cohort, raised among the barbarous nations which composed their empire, to train and discipline them. The same system is still practised by the British in India, and perhaps by every civilized state which has

armies levied among rude and barbarous tribes. This Usipian cohort, taking offence at some ill-treatment, or perhaps from a conspiracy to regain their independence, rose in a body, put to death the centurion and other officers who commanded them, and seized on three light galleys which were lying at hand in the port. The pilot of one of these vessels took to his heels and ran away; and the soldiers vented their rage upon the other two by killing both of them. They then put to sea without any sailors or steersmen to direct the vessels, and in a short time got out of sight. They afterwards landed at different points of the island to get food, but the natives came down to the coast to defend their property. In the actions which ensued they were sometimes victorious, and sometimes repulsed with loss. In this way they were reduced to so terrible a condition by famine, that they killed those of their companions who were the weakest and least able to resist, and finally they drew lots which should be put to death and be eaten by the rest. Thus they at last managed to sail round the northern extremity of Britain, till they lost all of the three vessels from want of skill to manage them, when they were captured as pirates, first by the Suevi, and afterwards by the Frisii. By these people some of them were sold as slaves, and passing through the hands of different purchasers, again came into the possession of Roman masters, to whom they related the adventures which they had gone through[g].

The ensuing summer [A.D. 84.] brought with it a domestic affliction to Agricola in the death of his son, a little boy born the preceding year. This bereavement he bore without affecting a Stoical indiffer-

[g] See also Xiphilinus lxvi. §. 20.

ence to the evils of humanity, or suffering himself on the other hand to be overcome by unmanly sorrow. A strong diversion and relief to his distress presented itself in the enemy, which stood often defeated, but still unsubdued before him. He determined in this campaign to push his successes into the heart of Caledonia. For this purpose he dispatched his fleet to sail round the island, and alarm the enemy by repeated descents upon their coasts. He then advanced with his army in excellent order, having with him some of the Britons, who had long before become allies of the Romans, and now assisted in the subjugation of their countrymen. The Britons' troops were drawn up on the Grampian hills, where, taught by their common danger the necessity of combining to repel their common enemy, they were now assembled from all the tribes of Caledonia to make a final stand for their native liberties. Thirty thousand were here met together, and fresh accessions were daily made to the number by all whose warlike vigour remained unabated by age, or whose military reputation prompted them to strike one more blow for their country's freedom. The leader of the combined army was Galgacus, the most distinguished of their generals for his personal valour and his high birth. He had no doubt been chosen by the rest, according to the custom which prevailed over all Britain, to lead their host in this last conflict with the Roman invaders. To inflame still higher the spirits of his men, and encourage them to the struggle which was approaching, Galgacus addressed them, we are told, in these words:

"When I look at the causes of the war, and the necessity to which we have been reduced, I feel confident, fellow-soldiers, that your joint exertions this

day will lay the basis for the freedom of all Britain. You have never yet had a taste of slavery; but there is no more land behind us to flee to: and we are shut out from the sea by the Roman fleet. Thus all of you, whether he be brave or whether he be a coward, must act together in this emergency, whether he seek to gain glory or to save his life, can find his resource in nothing but war and arms. We have fought many battles already against the Romans, and with various success; but our hopes and our resources were in our own hands. We are the most noble of the British tribes, seated here in the inmost coasts of Britain, far from the sight of slaves and slavery; we have kept our eyes unpolluted by the tyranny of a master. But now the charm is broken: the bounds of Britain are laid open, and we are no longer protected by the high estimate, which our enemies in their ignorance formed of us. We are the last nation that remains for them to subdue; all beyond us is sea and rocks: our enemies possess the heart of our country, and it is hopeless to avoid their haughtiness by mild measures or by submission. They are the plunderers of all the world, and, when they have no more land to ravage, they extend their depredations over the sea also. A rich foe is an object for their avarice, a poor one still furnishes a scope for their ambition: the remotest bounds of the East and of the West will not satisfy them: they grasp with the same eagerness at the wealth and the poverty of the universe; they fill the world with rapine and slaughter, which they designate as empire, and when they have reduced a country to a desert, they call it PEACE! Nature herself dictates that a man's children and relations should be his dearest ties; but Rome wrests from mankind these

dearest ties, and sends them as levies for her legions into remote regions. Our wives and sisters, if they escape the hands of the hostile soldiery, fall a prey to those whom they receive as friends and guests: our goods and fortunes are exhausted in the payment of tribute, our corn is consumed in provisioning their legions, our very hands and limbs are worn out in fortifying the woods and marshes, amidst blows and insults. The true-born slave is but sold once, and is nourished afterwards at his master's cost: but Britain is constantly feeding and paying for her own servitude. In one point indeed there is a resemblance: in a domestic family the last captive becomes the sport even of his fellow slaves; and we, in this ancient servitude of nations as the last new-comers, and as possessing nothing of value, are marked out as objects of destruction. We have no fields, which we can till for their use, no mines or harbours, where we can be kept to work. Valour and spirit we possess, but such qualities in slaves are odious in the sight of their masters: even the remoteness and solitude of our native land are objects of distrust to them, in proportion as they furnish security to us. Thus then, as we have no hopes of forgiveness, be of good courage, if you wish to preserve your lives and your honour. The Trinobantes, headed by a woman[h], set fire to a Roman colonial town[i], forced a Roman camp, and, if success had not lulled them into inactivity, might have altogether freed themselves from the foreign yoke. Shall not we, then, who are still free and unharmed, and therefore fighting to keep and not to recover our liberties, shew the world at the first onset what kind of people Caledonia contains?

[h] Boadicea, see page 101.

[i] Camalodunum.

"Do you think that the Romans are as brave in war, as they are licentious in peace? Their success has proceeded from our dissensions; they always turn the faults of their enemies to the glory of their own arms. Their armies have been drawn from different nations, and are held together only by success: the first touch of adversity will disperse them, unless we acknowledge that the Gauls, Germans, and—I blush to speak it—most of the Britons also, have been so well trained to fidelity during a short and recent servitude, that they have forgotten the long struggle which they made in the cause of independence. But this is not the case: fear and dread are their only ties, and these are but weak bonds of fidelity: once remove them, and hatred will begin when fear has ended.

"But further, every thing which can add charms to victory is on our side: the Romans have no wives to encourage them: no fathers to upbraid them if they run away: most of them have no country to care for, or at all events one that is far away. So few are they in number, and so alarmed by continued watching, that it seems as if the Gods had given them up into our hands: heaven and earth fight against them, every thing is new and unknown to them, an unknown climate, and a strange sea, and strange forests, in the depths of which they are held fast to become our prisoners. Do not be frightened at outward show: the shine of their gold and silver cannot save them, or do harm to us. Besides, we shall find friends in their own ranks: the British levies will hail a cause which is their own; the Gauls will remember their ancient liberty; and all the other Germans will desert, as did the Usipians[k] a little while ago. Let us conquer

[k] See the adventures of the Usipian cohort in page 135.

these who are before us, and nothing remains to alarm us; nothing but ungarrisoned castles, colonies of old men: what with a disaffected people, and tyrannical governors, the Roman municipalities in Britain are in a weak and distracted state. Here we have a general to lead us on, and an army fit for fighting: with them you will meet with nothing but taxes to pay, mines to work, and all the rest of those burdens which are laid on slaves; and whether you will submit to such a fate for ever, or for ever be released from it, depends upon the issue of this day's battle. When therefore you advance against the enemy, think of your noble ancestors, think of your children who will come after you!"

This address of Galgacus[1], we are told, was received by his soldiers with acclamations and discordant shouts. The rival armies were drawn up in array for battle over against each other, when Agricola, considering the occasion sufficiently important to authorize every exertion and means of precaution which he could think of, advanced in front of his small but brave and gallant army, and addressed them in language to this import.

"It is now the eighth year, brave companions in arms, since your valour and fidelity, seconding the

[1] It would be interesting to know where Tacitus got his account of this speech of Galgacus: it cannot be supposed that any Roman soldiers were present in the Caledonian camp, and it is equally improbable that any Caledonian deserters or captives would be the means of communicating even the substance of what was said. But several of the ancient historians were fond of putting speeches into the mouths of their heroes, and Tacitus is well known for such a peculiarity. I however have given the speech, without undertaking to be responsible for its correctness.

good fortune of the Roman empire, have reduced Britain to subjection. Through all the numberless expeditions and battles you have been engaged in, the bravery and toilsome perseverance you have shewn in encountering not only the enemy, but even nature herself, I have had no cause to repent of my soldiers, nor you of your general. We have both of us outdone all who have gone before us: no general or army has ever passed so far beyond the usual bounds as we have done, and here we are on the furthest extremity of Britain, which we are actually occupying with our camp, and not according to the mere fictions of public report. When you were on your march hither, and harassed by the marshes, rivers, and mountains which impeded your path, did I not hear you cry out, 'When shall we see the enemy, when shall we be brought to battle?' Now you see the enemy before you, driven from their retreat, and forced to fight: now then you have a fair field on which to exert your valour: all will depend upon the result of this day's battle, all will be smooth if you gain the victory, all disastrous if you are defeated. For as so much ground got over, so many woods cleared, so many æstuaries crossed, open the way to glory and honour, all that now seems advantageous will prove the more fatal to our retreat. We are not so well acquainted with the country as our enemies, or equally supplied with provisions: so that we have no resource but in our arms and weapons. For myself I have long since decided, that neither general nor army can ever find safety in flight. An honourable death is better than a life of disgrace, and safety and glory are but one common cause. If we fall, it will be no disgrace to die here, on the confines of nature and of the world.

"But further, if it were a new foe that we had to contend with, and a strange nation that we were invading, I should point out to you the deeds of other armies, and exhort you to follow their example; but now I have no need to do so; look back on your own brave deeds, and then ask your own eyes, who are the enemy before you? These are the same people who attacked your camp last year by night, and fled at the first sound of your shouts: these are those tribes who have always run away from us, and to this is it owing that they have baffled us so long. Like hunters, we have beaten the woods and forests of Britain, until we destroyed all the noble game, and none remain but the cowardly and inactive, whom the bare noise of the hunters has scared into these remote regions. Their appearance in arms before us this day cannot be called resistance, but a capture, for you have at last found them, and they cannot escape you; your victory will be glorious and complete. Here then your marshes and dangers end, here you will put the finish to a war of fifty years: on this battle field we will prove to our countrymen at Rome, that the long delays of this protracted warfare, and the causes which have led the enemy so often to revolt, have never been imputable to their soldiers."

The address of Agricola inspirited his men with redoubled ardour for the battle, and the little band was soon drawn up in the manner which enabled them to make most advantage of the ground, and of their military superiority. Eight thousand[m] foot of the allies and three thousand horse, with perhaps four thousand legionaries, was all that Agricola had to oppose to more than twice that number of the enemy: but every military commander knows, that this disproportion was

[m] Tacit. Ag. 20.

trifling in comparison with the many advantages of the Romans. The Caledonian army looked formidable from the declivity upon which they were posted: the slope of the ground enabled the Romans to see rank rising above rank in long and warlike array; whilst the valley which intervened between the two armies presented a moving spectacle, with the cavalry and war chariots which thronged the field in all sides. In front of the Caledonians, Agricola drew up his auxiliary infantry eight thousand in number, flanked on both sides by the three thousand horse, whilst in the rear the legionaries were posted, to carry assistance if needed to the auxiliaries, but, if not required, to look on and see those subordinates gain the victory, and then to participate in its honours and share its rewards. The Roman system was the most cold and unfeeling which man has yet devised for bending his species under the dominion of a conqueror, and maintaining the world in subjection without regard to its sufferings or fear of consequences.

But the numerical superiority of the enemies was so great, that the Roman army could not be drawn up in its usual compact form, lest the enemy should attack it on all sides at once. To prevent this from happening, Agricola placed the troops with intervals between them, and so extended his flanks by weakening the centre. Some of his officers advised that the legionaries, who were in reserve, should be brought up to supply the deficiency, but Agricola, whose military science best measured the emergency, refused to alter the plan of battle, and to encourage his men, he sent away his horse, and took his post on foot in front of the Roman eagle.

The engagement began with missiles, which the

Britons turned aside with their small targets, and often parried with their long claymores[n], while the Romans were at first perplexed and overwhelmed by the shower of arrows which the enemy rained upon them. Agricola seeing this, chose out three troops of Batavians and two of Tungrians, and ordered them to close at once with the enemy. This was a service for which those nations were from long experience well adapted, and they were armed in such a way, that the Britons with their large pointless swords, and small shields, had no chance against them at close quarters. The Batavians therefore had no difficulty in forcing back the confused mass of the enemy across the valley, whilst every thrust told on the faces and other exposed parts of the bodies of the Britons, who were crowded together in a narrow compass, and had not room to deal a blow at the enemy in return. They were therefore driven in a mass over the plain and up the side of the hill, whilst the other bodies of Roman troops, seeing the success of the Batavians, hastened to follow their example, and the whole line advanced upon the enemy. The violence of this general charge carried all before it, but was not so fatal to the Caledonians as it might have been; for they were borne down and rolled in masses on the ground, but most of them without receiving a wound. Their war-chariots and cavalry were mingled with the infantry in inextricable confusion, and those light carriages, which were calculated to deal such havoc among light armed troops, less ably disciplined than those of Rome, were utterly useless against the firm army that was now opposed to them. They were dragged about by the horses without plan or guidance,

[n] The target and claymore have been in all ages the favourite weapons of the Highlanders of Scotland.

and running foul of one another, served only to embarras the rest of the army.

Meantime the main body of the Britons who had remained on the top of the hill, entertaining apparently the most supreme contempt for the small army that was in front of them, at this moment made a lateral movement on either side, and were gradually surrounding the Romans on the flank. This contingency however had been provided for by the foresight of Agricola. Four troops of horse, set apart for this service, charged the advancing multitude with vigour, and after a brief resistance dispersed them. Thus the stratagem of the Britons proved fatal to themselves; for their superiority of number, which, if kept together, might have maintained the possession of the hill against the advancing enemy, was thus drawn away from the centre where it was most needed, and wasted on the extreme flanks, where they met with nothing but loss and discomfiture. The British centre was now too weak to resist any longer, and the whole plain presented a most shocking appearance; the Roman soldier, elated with his easy victory, was neither revengeful nor bloodthirsty. The defeated Caledonian was of more value to him as a slave for the market, than as a victim to the god of war. Hence the victors were seen dispersed over the plain, and making prisoners in numbers that it was impossible to calculate; and ever and anon, as new ones presented themselves, they found it a necessary precaution to slay the enemies who were too numerous to be carried off captives, and might still, if left alive, offer many obstacles to the completeness of their victory. On the side of the vanquished, were all those conflicting feelings and modes of action, which characterises a routed army,

and which the poet, not the historian, may venture to describe. Here some of their largest bands fled before a smaller number: there again others unarmed stood still, or rushed on to meet the foe, as if 'eager to anticipate their grave.' The ground was strewed with arms, bodies, and mangled limbs, and drenched with blood. The flight of the fugitives was marked by a bloody track till they reached the forests, those natural fortresses of Scotland which existed in ancient times, but have now for centuries been destroyed. Here the flying soldiers, feeling themselves more safe, resumed a little of their native courage, and collecting in a body, fell with unexpected fury upon the foremost of their pursuers, and in an instant surrounded them with numbers. But the Roman general was himself in every part of the battle, and seeing the danger, he detached some strong and active cohorts to scour the country and beat the woods: he also ordered part of the cavalry to dismount and continue the pursuit on foot through the woods, whilst the others still acted on horseback in all the more open parts. By these precautions the Roman army was saved from great danger and considerable loss, which they might otherwise have received by their too great confidence. The same measures also produced the effect of discouraging the new ardour of the Britons, who seeing their hopes of a diversion baffled by the good order and discipline of the enemy, took to their heels, not in bodies as before, but individually as each was best able, making their utmost speed to reach the wildest and most inaccessible depths of the forest. Night and fatigue put an end to the pursuit. Nearly ten thousand of the Caledonians lay dead upon the field: the loss of the

Romans was about three hundred and forty-four°, among whom was Aulus Atticus, prefect of a cohort, who had been hurried by the warmth of youth and the impetuosity of his horse into the middle of the enemy.

The army passed the night in the immediate neighbourhood of the scene of action, in joy and exultation at the important victory which they had gained. All the night they heard the movements and lamentations of the Britons, who returned, though probably in no formidable numbers, to carry off their dead; men and women were seen destroying their houses, which they set fire to with their own hands, and holding irresolute counsels together how they should now act: the sight of their wives and children drove them to despair and to frenzy. "It is a certain fact," says Tacitus, "that several of the Caledonians, to save their wives and children from slavery, starvation, or the sword, murdered them with their own hands." Such are the invariable results of the ambition of a conquering nation, such the tragedy which Rome enacted in the north of Britain, where, though she reaped her usual harvest of spoil and glory, she found even there that the spirit of man would still rise against her tyranny, and assume a form not unworthy to be compared with

° There is no accounting for the extraordinary inequality of men slain in these great battles. Even in more civilized times, the disproportion has been still greater. It is said that at the battle of Poictiers the French lost 15000 men, whilst only 400 of the English were put hors du combat: and I find on enquiry, for I always suspected national mendacity in such apparently exaggerated statements, that the French historians agree with our own in the number of men said to have been slain on that fatal field.

that which animated to bitterness and to despair the defenders of Numantia [p].

The next morning revealed to the victors the full extent of their victory. Profound silence reigned on all sides, the hills were deserted by the roving bands which had so lately covered them; houses were seen smouldering in ruins all over the country; the scouts, who were sent out in all directions, observed traces of the enemy's flight, but not a human being was any where to be seen. The whole country was deserted; the Caledonians had fled into those pathless wilds where no invading enemy could follow them, where 'they have so often taken breath after they have been defeated in the open field, and have returned from thence with fresh strength to expel the foreigner from their land [q].

The summer was now so far advanced, that Agricola did not think it prudent to continue the war: he therefore led his army back into the country of the Orestii, of whom he took hostages for their good behaviour, and continued his march towards the south.

Meanwhile the admiral of the fleet, pursuant to the instructions of his superior, set sail to circumnavigate the whole island. Furnished with a sufficient force, he struck terror into all the tribes whose shores he approached: he also first explored, and reduced to

[p] The inhabitants of Numantia set fire to their city, and threw their wives, their children, and themselves into the flames, rather than become slaves of the Romans.

[q] The Highlands of Scotland remained almost in their original state till after the battle of Culloden. After that time, the British government formed military roads, and opened the country in such a manner, that it might be no longer formidable, or a nursery for what they called 'rebellion.'

submission, the Orkney Isles, which until then were only known by name, and having at last sailed round the whole island, reached in safety the port[1] from which the fleet had sailed at the beginning of the campaign.

The army was also about the same time led into winter quarters, and the general dispatched to Rome on account of the successes which he had gained. But the emperor, who now sat on the throne of the civilized world, was no longer a Vespasian or a Titus. The youngest and last of the Flavian family was compelled to hear the modest recital of Agricola's victories with an appearance of satisfaction, but they settled near his heart, and filled his mind with inquietude. Jealousy is the tribute which meanness pays to superior merit; and Domitian had at this moment too good cause for jealousy. He had lately led a triumphal procession to celebrate a pretended victory over the Germans, and purchased slaves, whom he decked out in appropriate costumes and head-dresses, to represent his captives; the thought of this unworthy ceremonial, which, as he knew, brought ridicule to the lips of some, and blushes to the cheeks of others of the citizens, made his conscience tremble before the halo of noble deeds and hard-earned glories, which sat on the brow of the Proprætor of Britain. The throne of the empire had passed twice in lineal descent to his own family; it was not yet become hereditary, but he himself was without an heir, and the Romans might be tempted to place their triumphant general in the seat of his unworthy master. Domitian

[1] The name of this port is Portus Trutulensis in the text of Tacitus: but no such port is mentioned elsewhere. The commentators read Rutupensis, Richborough, or Sandwich in Kent.

reflected, that all his fancied superiority in eloquence and the liberal arts were nothing, if another were to carry off the prize of military glory, which is essential to the safety of an emperor. These considerations however did not prevent him from observing due decorum on the receipt of Agricola's dispatches from Britain. He concealed his thoughts with the closest reserve, and determined to smother his enmity until the first impression of Agricola's triumph and the honours of the victorious army should have worn away. For Agricola still commanded in Britain, and what was still more important, in the hearts of his soldiers: it was unsafe for Domitian to advance by any other than by a sinuous path, strewed with flowers, which concealed the venom of the serpent.

In pursuance of this policy, the emperor ordered that the triumphal ornaments should be voted to Agricola, together with a statue, in full senate; and he took care to have it publicly reported about that he was, on his return from Britain, to be appointed to the rich government of Syria, then vacant by the death of Atilius Rufus. It was indeed supposed by some that the emperor's freedman, whom he employed in his secret commissions, was sent to Agricola with letters conferring the province of Syria upon him, and charged to deliver them to him if he found him still in Britain. But the truth of this report could never be ascertained, for Agricola passed the messenger on his way to the continent, and the freedman, without having had any interview with him, returned to the imperial court.

Agricola surrendered his province in a peaceful and settled condition to his successor, and made the best of his way to Rome. To avoid the concourse of people, who, he knew, would be got together to do

honour to his arrival, he entered the city by night, and avoided even the civilities and salutations of his friends. He even went to the palace by night to wait on the emperor: but this, probably from a pretended care of his person, and real fear of a tumult, was in accordance with the order of the emperor.

When Agricola reached the audience-chamber, Domitian received him with a cold and formal kiss; and, without a word passing on either side, the conqueror of Britain fell back from the presence of his ungrateful sovereign, and was lost in the crowds of sycophants and slaves who thronged the courts of the palace.

CHAP. XI.

SALLUSTIUS LUCULLUS, LIEUTENANT OF BRITAIN—REIGNS OF NERVA, TRAJAN, AND HADRIAN—LITTLE KNOWN OF BRITAIN FOR MANY YEARS—ITS TRADE AND MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTIONS—THE DRUIDS—THEIR FALL.

THE return of Agricola from his government, in the eighty-fifth year of the Christian æra, was so joyful an event to the populace of Rome, that in the splendour of his triumph the island, from which he had obtained his glory, seems to have faded from the public notice. The remainder of Domitian's reign, extending to the year 96, presents but one allusion to our island. It is uncertain who succeeded Agricola in the government, but towards the end of Domitian's reign, the tyrant is said by Suetonius[a] to have put to death Sallustius Lucullus, lieutenant of Britain, for no other crime than calling by his own name some lances of a new form which he had invented[b]. From this brief

[a] Domit. 10.

[b] About this time also must have lived Arviragus, the British king mentioned by Juvenal, if indeed he is not a purely poetical character, introduced solely to adorn the discussion which takes place over the captive sturgeon.

> Sure 'tis an omen of some mighty triumph;
> Some king you'll capture, or from Britain's chariot
> Arviragus shall fall: the beast's no native,
> As you may see by th' bristles on his back.

Juv. Sat. iv. 126. If, however, Arviragus was a really-existing person, he was no doubt one of the independent Caledonian princes, and a worthy successor of Galgacus.

notice, it is impossible to deduce any facts which characterized the government of Lucullus; though it is not unreasonable to suppose, that the natives of Britain had received too severe a lesson from Agricola to rise again in arms against the Roman supremacy, or for a slight cause to draw down upon them the wrath of so powerful a nation.

On the death of Domitian, the Prætorian soldiers, who had usurped the right of electing the emperor, placed on the throne the virtuous but helpless Nerva. His short reign[c] was occupied in a hopeless endeavour to retain, in the elevation to which he was raised, those amiable qualities which, when he was in a private station, had endeared him to his fellow citizens. Within fifteen months the throne was again vacant, and was promptly filled by the great Trajan, who equalled his predecessor in personal merit, and exceeded him in the talents with which he ruled his dangerous charge. His long reign of twenty years, whilst it proves the ability with which his administration was conducted, and the licentious soldiery retained in their duty, was long afterwards remembered by the Romans for the skill with which the emperor blended the arts of peace with the triumphs of war.

But of the events which passed in Britain during the reign of Trajan, we have no information, nor is it till the accession of Hadrian, who reigned from the year A.D. 117, to 138, that Britain again occurs to notice in the pages of the Roman historians.

"The reign of Hadrian, like that of his predecessor, was a most active and energetic one. Notwithstanding many imperfections of character, this emperor was well qualified to superintend the affairs of his vast

[c] From Sept. 18, A.D. 96, to Jan. 25, A.D. 98.

empire. Although exceedingly restless and inquisitive, he possessed great method and judgment. His various journeys were undertaken from no motives of pride or ostentation, but from the earnest wish to inform himself thoroughly of the state of his dominions, and thence to derive sounder views of policy and government[d]."

"At the accession of Hadrian," says the Augustan historian Ælius Spartianus, who wrote a hundred and fifty years later than the events which he relates; "the nations which Trajan had subdued, were again in revolt: the Moors and Sarmatians were in arms, and the Britons refused any longer to be held in obedience."

Of the causes which led to this state of things, we are left to form the best conjecture that we can: for no contemporary writer has noticed the events which at this time were passing in Britain. To remedy the evils under which the provinces were suffering, Hadrian made a progress through the different states of his empire. In the course of his tour, he crossed into Britain in the year 120, where he found many things that required a healing hand. Of the evils complained of and of the remedies used to redress them, history is equally silent. We have no information of the civil or military condition of the provincials at this time, nor of the measures which Hadrian took to restore things to a sounder state. But the same writer[e], to whom we are indebted for our knowledge of his having visited Britain at all, informs us, that previously to his departure, he constructed a huge wall or rampart, eighty miles in length, across the island, to protect the Romans from the northern barbarians. This fact is

[d] Thackeray, vol. i. p. 117.

[e] Spartianus in V. Had. c. 11.

too important to be dispatched with a hasty notice. The situation of Hadrian's wall is not stated by the historian, but so great a work must have carried with it for centuries the memory of its founder: and it is the generally received opinion, to which we shall hereafter recur, that the wall of Hadrian was extended from the north of the Tyne on the eastern coast of Northumberland, to the town of Bowness, on the coast of the Irish sea. All the country, therefore, which lay to the north of this fortification, was acknowledged to belong to the barbarians: but this admission was as glorious to the Caledonians, as it was disparaging to the Romans; for in the course of thirty-five years, their armies must have retreated nearly 100 miles, since Agricola, in his third campaign, had drawn a line of fortresses between the friths of Forth and Clyde, by which all the lowlands of modern Scotland were claimed as belonging to the Roman empire. But now the whole of that district, together with part of the north of England, were again virtually admitted to belong to the native tribes, and even that portion of the island, which the Romans still held, was protected by a formidable line of defences from those pertinacious barbarians, whom no armies could subjugate, whom no reverses could dispirit. This stupendous work, which principally marks the visit of Hadrian to Britain, was executed with speed, commensurate with the mighty means which a Roman autocrat possessed for carrying it into execution.

Immediately afterwards, the emperor departed from the island[f], which is again lost to the notice of the

[f] It was during Hadrian's visit, that the poet Florus addresses these lines to him:

world, until we find, twelve or thirteen years later, that its governor, Julius Severus, was dispatched with many other able commanders, to conduct the war against the revolted Jews, who hoped at this time to revive in the holy land the ancient independence of their race. No other event is recorded of Britain or British affairs, until the reign of Antoninus Pius.

But though the Roman legions were baffled in all their attempts to subdue the northern tribes[g] of Britain, by far the largest portion of it had been at this time completely moulded into a Roman province, and, as during the forty years that had elapsed since the defeat of Galgacus, the war between the nations had never again assumed a general character, the provincials of the south were gradually inured to the dominion of Rome, and had learnt to imitate in refinement and in polished manners the wonderful foreigners, to whose arms they had been compelled to bow. That the state of the country was for all purposes of civilization superior to

Cæsar himself I would not be,
Were the choice imposed on me,
To march on foot through British foes,
And bear their Scythian frosts and snows.

To this Hadrian returned the following reply,

Florus himself I would not be,
Were the choice imposed on me,
To sleep in stinking tavern-halls
Where gorged mosquitoes line the walls.

[g] The account which Appian [A.D. 140.] gives of this matter, ascribes to the Romans more magnanimity and moderation of conquest than they generally displayed. "They have penetrated into Britain, which is greater than a large continent, and have got possession of more than half of it, and that the best part; but they do not wish to possess the other part; for what they have already, is of no use to them." App. Pref. 5.

what it was in independence, may be taken for granted; and though the wild energies of the original British character had no longer room for development, yet the happiness of the people was probably increased in proportion to the greater enjoyments which they received. Trade and commerce already began to take deep root in the island, and the city of London had already given tokens of its aptitude to become, what after seventeen centuries we at last see it, the emporium of Europe, and the mercantile capital of the world.

Another Roman city in Britain, to which allusion is continually made, was Verulam, near the modern St. Alban's, and a third was Camalodunum, a most important military post, supposed to be Malden in Essex. York was also rising into importance, and will repeatedly occur to notice in connection with some of the most distinguished of the emperors, who at successive periods conducted in person the war against the Caledonians. But, whilst the Roman arms were fluctuating, as we have seen, on the furthest limits of the known world, vice, the poet and satirist informs us, was making fierce inroads upon the Roman character and morals at Rome:

> Our arms have reach'd beyond Juverna's[h] shores,
> Orkneys, and Britain, where hot summer nights
> Content the natives; but the deeds which they
> Would shudder at, are done without a blush
> In Rome's own streets.

Those who would contrast the extreme of which the same people are equally capable, should peruse the narrative of Cincinnatus and his frugal feast in the pages of Livy, and compare with it the epicurism and

[h] Ireland. See Juvenal, Sat. ii. 159.

gluttony of the same people as described by Juvenal at the close of the first century after the Christian era. The epicure, who is the subject of the poet's satire,

> Could at one bite the oyster's taste decide,
> And say if at Circæan rocks, or in
> The Lucrine lake, or on the coasts of Richborough
> In Britain they were bred[1].

But Roman luxury drew more costly merchandize from Britain than her oysters; there was an opinion prevalent at Rome, even before the invasion of Julius Cæsar that our island produced pearls of sufficient clearness and magnitude, to render them objects of value in the Roman markets. The avidity of the Romans for this species of ornament was much greater than that of any nation in modern times, and much curiosity prevailed at Rome to know what would be the nature of the pearl trade in Britain, as soon as Cæsar's invasion should have opened a freer access to the island. On his return to Rome, that general hung up a breast-plate of British pearls in the temple of Venus, with an inscription to commemorate his expedition[k]. But it was soon discovered that the British pearls were of a dark and livid colour, and would not bear comparison with those which were found in the Red Sea, and other eastern waters[l]. Another peculiarity of the pearls found in Britain was, the precarious and accidental character of the fishery; for whereas in the east, the pearl oysters were torn in large numbers from the rocks where they grew, those of Britain are said to have been collected as they were cast up by the sea upon the strand. It was hinted, that those who gathered them were unskilful, but it was more likely that Nature had been

[1] Juv. Sat. iv. 140. [k] Solinus, c. 53. [l] Tacit. Vita Agric. c. 20.

scanty in the supply, than that the Roman luxury should be backward to seize upon her bounties[m]. Notwithstanding these objections, we find mention is made by all succeeding writers[n] of the British pearl fishery, though for more than a thousand years, no attempt has been made by the moderns to revive the search for them as a separate branch of commerce.

Of the specific nature of the commerce carried on in Britain, we know but little. The soil of the island was as green and fertile as it has been in all succeeding times, but the arts and modes of life which prevailed among its inhabitants, will always be interesting to those who are born on the same soil, and breathe the same native air. All our knowledge of these things must be drawn from the writings of their conquerors; for no written record of the Ancient Britons has come down to us, and during the earliest period of their history, from the invasion of the island by Cæsar to its settlement by Agricola, it is not probable that the art of writing was generally known in the island.

Of the mode of government which prevailed among the indigenous tribes of our island, it would be idle to attempt more than a recapitulation of the remarks

[m] Ibidem.

[n] Thus Ausonius the poet, writing about the year 380, speaks of the

wonderful oysters which
The Caledonian tide sometimes throws up.

[Ep. ix.] And again, [Moselle, v. 68.]

Such sight is known to Caledonian Britons,
When green sea-weed and blood-red coral lie
Uncovered by the tide, and pearls that grow
Within the sea-shell, and which form the pride
Of men luxurious: such beneath the waters
The gems that lie and imitate the jewels
We bracelets call.

which have already been extracted from the Roman writers. The kingly authority was not unknown to them, and its nature was no doubt similar to that of the German chiefs of tribes; deriving its origin most probably from the more ancient patriarchal form of government, which is the intermediate link in the social progress between a single family and a tribe. Thus in all countries the first rulers have been no more than elders or heads of families, to whom succeeded chieftains or heads of clans, who have gradually shifted their authority from their followers to a definite extent of territory, including of course its inhabitants; and have thus become a species of petty king, or, as the Roman writers have termed them, kinglets. To this class would seem to belong the sovereigns of the petty states, which we have had occasion to notice in the foregoing pages. But the next stage is the union of several of their smaller states or principalities into one, and this was a stage in civil government to which the Britons never fully arrived. It is true, that to meet a formidable invasion, they could combine under one chief, generally some one who was well-known as an experienced military leader. Such was Cassivellaunus, who opposed and checked the progress of the first Cæsar. Such also were Cunobelin, Caractacus, and Boadicea: but their authority naturally ceased with the emergency which gave birth to it: though the lapse of another century might perhaps have produced some eminent chief, who, like the Saxon Egbert in after ages, would have united the various British tribes into one permanent kingdom. But the Romans came, and, as much by their skilful management of native quarrels as by the superiority of their arms, they ex-

tinguished for ever the dynasty of the aboriginal Britons.

It is true that the sketch here given, of the political system of our first forefathers, is more brief and meagre than our curiosity would require: but it may be reasonably supposed, that however it might amuse us to possess more detailed accounts, yet we should derive very little valuable instruction or benefit from knowing more of a people who occupied so limited a page in the great book of the history of mankind. But though our records of British life and manners are in general so scanty, we occasionally find an incidental allusion in the Roman writers, which shews that the inhabitants of Britain are still in many respects what they were in the earliest period of their history. Thus we learn from Martial, that the Britons were basket-makers, and it is more interesting to find that they called their work by the same name which it still bears.

> Work of barbaric art, a basket I
> From painted Britons came, but the Roman city
> Now call the painted Britons' art their own[o].

The same poet informs us[p], that his own verses were said to have already found their way into Britain, and to be chanted by the people. But this honour did not deter Martial from aiming his wit at the *braccæ*, "breeks" or "breeches," which even then were worn in Britain, and the convenience of which has since caused them for many hundred years to be worn at Rome.

> "Lydia," says the poet, "is as loose
> As the old breeches of a British pauper."

[o] Mart. xiv. 99. [p] Id. xi. 3.

Another production for which Britain is still famous, were its dogs, which in the time of the poet Nemesian, the Somervile of his day, were objects of well-merited attention.

HUNTING POEM, v. 123.

But not the Spartan dog and swift Molossian
Alone demand your care; for furthest Britain
Sends forth a hound that's swift of foot, and fit
To urge the chase in this part of our globe.

Lead and tin were well known products of Britain; the former was first exported to the Mediterranean by one Midacritus, out of Britain, where it was found in extraordinary abundance, as related by Pliny[q]. The same writer remarks, that the Britons still manufactured canoes made of wicker-work and covered with skins: such boats have continued in use on the river Wye, in Wales, almost to our own times[r]. Amber, was believed by Sotacus to be found in Britain flowing from the rocks, but this account has received no confirmation[s]. Cherries, it appears, were already known in Britain before the first century of the Christian æra. This fruit was first introduced into Italy, after the war with Mithridates, by Lucullus, about seventy years before Christ, and within 120 years from that time, it had extended into Britain[t]. Woad also was grown by the natives, and used, as it is now used, as a dye or pigment, but the Britons, says Mela, painted their bodies with this material, either as an ornament, or for some other purpose[u]: whilst with an indelicacy still more shocking to the ears of their descendants, our British mothers stained themselves all over with the dye, so as to become as dark

[q] Plin. vii. 54. xxxiv. 49. [r] Id. vii. 54. Solin. c. 22.
[s] Id. xxxvii. 11. [t] Id. xv. 30. [u] Mel. Ge. iii. 6.

as blackamoors, and so walked naked in some of their sacred ceremonies[*].

But the system of social life which existed among the ancient Britons is said to have had one element of a nature as singular and curious as it is difficult to be understood. That in all nations which have made progress in civilization and the arts, there will arise two castes, either dominant from the first, or seeking to be

[*] Pliny xxii. 2. The poet Dionysius Periegetes seems to allude to some of these rites in the following lines;

But near the sacred cape,
There where they say is Europe's utmost bound,
And near th' Hesperides, whence tin proceeds,
Dwell the rich progeny of noble Spain:
And on the ocean's northern coasts are found
Two British islands fronting to the Rhine,
Where in the sea he disembogues his stream:
Of these th' extent is vast, no other isles
To the Britannic justly can compare.
Islets adjacent lie, wherein the wives
From the Amnites' distant shore perform
Due rites to Bacchus thro' the livelong night,
Deck'd in the dark-leav'd ivy's clustering buds,
While the shrill echo of their chaunt resounds:
Not so, upon Absinthus' Thracian banks
Bistonians hail the harsh Iraphiote;
Nor thus, around the dark-gulf'd Ganges' stream,
The Indians with their sons on Bacchus call,
Noisy and loud, amid the festive scene,
As shout these women 'Evoe' to their god.
Far more remote, dividing ocean's flood
With firm-built bark, you Thule's isle approach:
And here the sun, proceeding to the pole,
Still day and night pours out his brilliant fire,
What time he turns with wheeling more oblique,
His rays inclining to a point direct,
Till to the Moors he bends his southern path.

dominant; a priesthood on the one hand, and a nobility on the other, is a point of history so well ascertained, that it now scarcely needs to be proved or to be illustrated. These two governing castes, sometimes in their origin antagonistic, have been always found ultimately to fall into a certain harmony, and to lend their aid in mutually supporting one another. Thus the Jewish hierarchy, which for 400 years, from Moses to Saul, governed the people by a Theocracy, hesitated for a brief space to sanction the clamours which the people made, to have a king like the neighbouring nations: but the wishes of the people were too strong for the priests, who acquiesced in the people's petition; and from that time another period of 400 years passed away, during which the rights of the kingly and sacerdotal castes were clearly defined, or at all events harmonized so well, that very little occasion for disputes ever arose between them. The Grecian and Roman states present no exceptions to this view, for we read of no collisions between the priests and the state, but, on the contrary, the greatest unanimity prevailed between the two. How far the relation of Christianity to the government of the countries in which it has been established, may be an exception or an illustration of the rule, it is not the province of this work to consider; for history takes cognizance of that which is past and complete, and leaves to the statesman to apply to existing contingencies and to passing events the wisdom, which the lesson taught by history will furnish to those who seek it.

The inhabitants of the "remote island" were no exception to the general rule of the world. A caste of priests is said to have existed in Britain, and in Gaul, of a character decidedly different from any that

we find in Greece, or in Rome: and one of which it is evident that we know but little, because the accounts which have reached us on the subject, are so scanty in proportion to its importance. Though a large number of modern authors have endeavoured to handle the topic, it is still almost as obscure as it was before they commenced their researches: for, as the whole of the accounts which the Roman and Grecian writers have left us concerning the Druids will hardly occupy five pages of this work, it is the natural inference, that the voluminous dissertations of later authors must be remarkable rather for ingenuity than for historic truth.

The first notice of the Druids is found in the Commentaries of Julius Cæsar, but as he avowedly drew his narrative from what he saw in Gaul, and not in Britain, where he was too busy with military matters to bestow much attention on the religious systems of the natives, it is still a question how far the same statements may be applicable to both countries. The following is a translation of the account which he gives us of the Druids in Gaul, where by a residence of several years in different parts of that country, he may be supposed to have gained a tolerably correct knowledge of this and many other subjects concerning their national rites and customs.

"There are two classes of persons who enjoy honour and estimation among the Gauls. . . . One of these two classes are the Druids: the other are the Knights. The Druids act in all sacred matters; attend to the sacrifices which are offered either by the state in general, or by private individuals, and answer all questions concerning their religion. They always have about them a large number of young men as pupils, who treat them with the greatest respect. For it is

they who decide in all controversies, whether public or private, and they judge all causes, whether of murder, of a contested inheritance, or of the boundaries of estates. They assign both rewards and punishments, and whoever does not abide by their sentence, whether he be in a public or private station, is forbidden to be present at the sacrifices to the Gods. This is in fact their most severe mode of punishment, and those, who have been thus excommunicated, are held as impious and profane: all avoid them, no one will either meet them or speak to them, lest they should receive detriment from their contagion; every species of honour is withheld from them, and if they are plaintiffs in a court of law, justice is denied them. All the Druids are subject to one chief, who enjoys the greatest authority among them. Upon the death of the chief Druid, the next in dignity is appointed to succeed him; and if there are two, whose merits are equal, the election is made by the votes of the whole body, but sometimes they dispute for preeminence with the sword. At a certain period of the year the Druids assemble in a consecrated grove, in the country of the Carnuti, which they consider to be the centre of Gaul. Here they are met by all who are at variance with one another, and who come here to have their quarrels decided.

"The Druidical system is thought to have had its origin in Britain, from whence it was introduced into Gaul; and it is still customary for those, who wish to study it more thoroughly, to pass over into Britain for that purpose.

"The Druids enjoy peculiar privileges; they are exempted from serving in war, and from the payment of taxes; they have also many other immunities, which

cause their order to become numerous and influential, and young persons are gladly placed with them to learn their doctrines by their parents and relations. In their schools the pupils are said to learn by heart a large number of verses, and in this way some of their scholars pass twenty years in completing their education: for it is unlawful to commit their doctrines to writing, though they are not ignorant of the art of writing; and for all other purposes, both in their public and private reckonings, they make use of the Greek characters. It seems to me that they have two motives to this conduct: in the first place, they are unwilling that their tenets should become known to the vulgar; and, secondly, they are afraid that the pupils will be less apt to cultivate their memories, if they trust to written characters, which often have the effect of checking diligent study. Among their most important tenets, is the Immortality of the Soul, which they believe passes after death into other bodies[7]: they hold this to be a great inducement to the practice of virtue, as the mind becomes relieved from the fear of death. Their other doctrines concern the motions of the heavenly bodies, the magnitude of the earth and the universe, the nature of things, the power and attributes of the Immortal Gods.

"The other privileged class among the Gauls consists of the Knights, who all take part in the wars of the community; and this often happened before the invasion of Cæsar, in consequence of the quarrels which occurred between the different tribes. The Knights are attended by followers and clients; and from the number of these may be inferred the relative power

[7] This is the doctrine called the Transmigration of souls, found in India among the Brahmins, and many other countries.

and importance of the chiefs, for this is the only aristocratical distinction they have among them.

"All the Gallic nation are much given to superstition; for which reason, when they are seriously ill, or are in danger from their wars or other causes, they either offer up men as victims to the Gods, or make a vow to sacrifice themselves. The ministers in these offerings are the Druids; and they hold, that the wrath of the Immortal Gods can only be appeased, and man's life be redeemed, by offering up human sacrifice; and it is part of their national institutions to hold fixed solemnities for this purpose. Some of them make immense images of wicker-work, which they fill with men, who are thus burnt alive in offering to their Deities. These victims are in general selected from among those who have been convicted of theft, robbery, or other crimes, in whose punishment they think the Immortal Gods take the greatest pleasure: but if there is a scarcity of such victims, they do not hesitate to sacrifice the innocent also.

"Their principal Deity is Mercury, in whose honour they have erected numerous statues; they hold him to be the inventor of all the arts, and the God who protects men on a journey, and leads them on their way: moreover, they ascribe to him the power of granting success and prosperity in affairs of gain and commerce.

"Next to Mercury come Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, and Minerva, to whom they ascribe attributes similar to those which are attributed to these Deities among other nations: Apollo is considered to heal diseases, Minerva to initiate mankind in the arts and sciences, Jupiter to be the King of Heaven, and Mars to be the God of War. When the Gauls are about to fight a battle

they often make a vow to dedicate to Mars the spoils which they may take from their enemies. If there is a superabundance of cattle taken in war, the surplus is offered up in sacrifice: the rest of the spoil is collected into one mass. In many of their cities large heaps of these things may be seen in their consecrated places: and it is a rare occurrence for any individual, sacrilegiously, to conceal part of the booty, or to turn it to his own use: the severest punishment, together with bodily torture, is inflicted on those who are guilty of such an offence.

"The Gauls boast that they sprung from father Dis[1], and say that they derive their information from the Druids. This is the reason why they measure time by nights and not by days, and their birth-days, together with the commencements of their months and years, are so arranged, that the days are reckoned as parts of the preceding nights. In their other customs also they differ from the rest of the world: for they never suffer their children to approach them until they are grown up and able to endure military service, and they think it disgraceful for a boy to appear in public in his father's presence.

"Husbands receive with their wives a certain sum of money as dowry, and add to it a proportionate sum out of their own revenues. An account of these united sums is kept, and the interest of them preserved: whichever of the married couple survives the other, receives a portion of this property, together with the interest of preceding years. Husbands have also the power of life and death over both their wives and children; and when the father of a family dies, if he was a man of the higher ranks, his relations come

[1] Pluto, the God of the Infernal regions.

together, and if there is any suspicion about the manner of his death, his wives are subjected to the torture, like slaves; and if the fact is proved, they are put to death by fire, and all kinds of torments. The funerals of the Gauls are sumptuous and splendid, in proportion to their civilization; every thing, in which a man was supposed to take pleasure whilst he was alive, is placed with him on the funeral pile, even animals: and not long ago, the slaves and dependents, whom he most liked, were burnt along with him.

"In those states which are thought to be the best regulated, it is ordained by their laws, that if any one hears any thing which concerns the government from the neighbouring people, he shall immediately communicate it to the magistrates, and to no other person, on account of the panic, which is often caused by alarms among the vulgar, driving them to act hastily, and to interfere in the public counsels. By these means the magistrates conceal whatever they think proper, and proclaim to the people only whatever they think expedient. It is unlawful to discuss public matters, except in the public assemblies."

This account, as given by Cæsar, is by far the most detailed, which remains to us from antiquity concerning the Druids. Two other passages, however, occur about ten years later, in the works of Diodorus Siculus and Strabo, and it is worthy of remark, that in both of these authors, and indeed in all the classical notices of the Druids which exist, the reference is made to the Druids of Gaul, and not of Britain. As the three passages of Cæsar, Diodorus, and Strabo, contain all that remain concerning the Druids antecedent to the

Christian æra, it is unnecessary to apologize for inserting these extracts entire.

The words of Diodorus are these:

"There are among them [the Gauls] composers of verses whom they call Bards; these, singing to instruments similar to lyres, applaud some, while they vituperate others. There are also certain philosophers and priests surpassingly esteemed, whom they call Druids. They have also soothsayers, who are held in high estimation; and these, by auguries and the sacrifice of victims, foretel future events, and hold the commonalty in complete subjection: and more especially, when they deliberate on matters of moment, they practise a strange and incredible rite; for having devoted a man for sacrifice, they strike him with a sword on a part above the diaphragm: the victim having fallen, they augur from his mode of falling, the contortion of his limbs, and the flowing of the blood, what may come to pass; giving credence concerning such things to an ancient and long-standing observance. They have a custom of performing no sacrifice unattended by a philosopher. For they say, that thanksgiving should be offered to the gods by men acquainted with the Divine nature, and using the same language, and by these they deem it necessary to ask for good things; and not only in the concerns of peace, but even of war, not friends alone, but even enemies also, chiefly defer to them and to the composers of verses. Frequently, during hostilities, when armies are approaching each other with swords drawn and lances extended, these men rushing between them put an end to their contentions, taming them as they would tame wild beasts[a]."

[a] Diod. Sic. v. 31

Strabo's account is very similar to both the foregoing:

"Among the Gauls three classes are more especially held in veneration, the Bards, Vates, and Druids. The Bards are singers and poets: the Vates are sacrificers and physiologists: the Druids, in addition to philosophy, study moral philosophy also. They are esteemed persons of great integrity, and are on that account entrusted with the decision of quarrels both public and private, insomuch that they have sometimes stopped battles when the combatants were on the point of engaging. Trials for murder are more especially committed to their decision. They consider the soul to be immortal, and also the world, but that ultimately fire and water will prevail. To a simple but passionate character, they unite much silliness, arrogance, and love of ornament. They wear golden chains round their necks, bracelets on their arms and wrists, and persons of importance are clothed in dyed garments embroidered with gold. . . . . They strike the man destined for sacrifice on the back with a sword, and draw their auguries from his palpitations. They never sacrifice unless the Druids are present. We are told that there are other kinds of human sacrifice in use among them: some of the victims are slain with arrows, others are crucified; after which they prepare a colossal figure of hay, and having thrown wood on it, they burn thereon oxen, all kinds of wild beasts, and men together."

These extracts almost exhaust the subject which now occupies us, for in the passages which are found in works later than the Christian æra, the language is little more than a repetition of the former. Thus the geographer Pomponius Mela seems to have had

before him the accounts of preceding writers, when he wrote the following[b].

"The Gauls have a species of eloquence peculiar to themselves, and the Druids are its teachers. These profess to know the size and form of the earth, and the universe, the motions of the heavens and of the stars, and the intentions of the immortal Gods. They take the young nobles of their tribe under their tuition, and teach them many things in secret. Their studies last a long time, as much as twenty years, in caves or the depths of the forests. One of their tenets which has transpired is the immortality of the soul, and the existence of a future state, which inspire them with much additional courage in war. As a result of this doctrine, they burn and bury with their dead all those things which were adapted for them when living. In former times they carried their accounts with them to the grave, and their claims of debts; and some of them would even burn themselves on the same funeral pyre with their friends, that they might be with them in a future life."

The Celtic nations admitted women as well as men into the ministry of their superstitions. One of the most remarkable instances is furnished by the same author in his account of the Prophetesses of Sena.

"Sena," says he, "in the British sea, lies over against the coasts of the Oxismii, and is famous for an oracle of the Gallic Deity, whose priestesses are said to be nine in number, and to be hallowed by perpetual virginity. They are called Gallicenæ, and are thought to possess singular powers, such as raising the seas and winds by their incantations, changing themselves

[b] Mela iii. 2.

into whatever kind of animals they please, and curing diseases which are elsewhere regarded as incurable. They are also said to know and to foretel future events, but they will not communicate this knowledge to any one but sailors, and not even to them, unless they expressly go to consult them."

These Prophetesses were no doubt connected in some way with the Druids, in the practice and manner of their superstitions.

We now come to the natural historian Pliny, who lived and wrote near the end of the first century of the Christian era. His voluminous work comprises almost every subject connected with the state of science, natural productions, and other phænomena of the different countries of the world. He speaks as follows of the Druids:

"The Druids, who are the magi of Gaul, esteem nothing more sacred than the mistletoe, and the tree on which it grows, if only it is an oak. Indeed they choose out groves of oaks, and use their leaves in all their sacred rites, so that their very name, Druids, may seem to be derived from the Greek name for oak. Every thing which grows upon those trees is considered by them as sent from heaven, and a sign that the tree is chosen by the Deity Himself. But the mistletoe is very rare to find, and when found, is sought with great avidity; particularly on the sixth moon, which, among these nations, makes the beginnings of their months and years, and of a generation after thirty years, because it then has abundance of strength, though not yet half of its full size. They call it in their language, 'All-heal,' and when they have made ready their sacrifices and banquets under the tree, they bring up two white bulls, whose horns are then bound for the first time.

A priest clothed in a white robe ascends the tree, and with a golden pruning-knife, lops off the bough, which is caught in a white towel. Then they immolate the victims, praying that God may prosper the gift to all who shall partake of it: for they think that by partaking of it as a drink, barren animals are rendered fertile, and all kinds of poisons are deprived of the power to harm[b]."

Another herb is named by Pliny, as also used by the Druids, though not held sacred like the mysterious mistletoe: he calls it selago[c], and says that they considered it an antidote to every thing pernicious, and its smoke to be a remedy for diseases of the eyes.

But of all the superstitions of the Druids, that which Pliny tells us of the anguinum or serpent's egg, is the most extraordinary and inexplicable.

"Innumerable serpents get together in the summer, and form it artificially by the saliva from the jaws and the foam from their bodies. The Druids say that it is projected with hisses into the air, and ought to be caught in a cloth without being suffered to touch the ground. The man who takes it should make his escape on horseback, for the serpents will pursue him, until a river flows between them, when they are stopped. A proof of this is its swimming against water even if bound with gold. It is further said, that, as magicians are sagacious in concealing their fraud, the anguinum ought to be taken during a certain moon, as if human foresight could divine when the serpents would operate. I have indeed seen the egg as big as a middle sized round apple, with a covering of cartilage like the numerous claws or the arms of a polypus, and worn by the Druids. It is said to give success in law-

[b] Plin. Nat. Hist. xvi. 95. [c] Ibid. xxiv. 62, 63.

suits and access to kings: so extraordinary is the absurdity of it, that a Roman knight of Vocontiæ, who had it in his bosom at a lawsuit, was to my certain knowledge put to death for that, and no other reason, by the deified emperor Claudius[d]."

If we may judge by these examples, well might Pliny say, "The art of magic has seized fast hold on the Gauls, even down to our times:" and he might have added, that the emperor must have been as weak as they; if he supposed that the practice of so foolish a superstition could give any advantage over an adversary in the conduct of a suit. We can hardly doubt that the Roman who suffered was punished for lending himself to a base and prohibited superstition, for the same emperor had publicly abolished Druidism, and all its practices. "For the reign of Tiberius [Claudius] Cæsar," says Pliny, "put an end to the Druids, and to all that class of bards and healers:" and the same fact is recorded by Suetonius, and at a later period by Aurelius Victor.

The last writer in chronological order who names the Druids and their doctrines is Ammianus Marcellinus, who briefly follows preceding writers[e], and describes them as divided into three classes, designated respectively as Bards, Druids, and Euhages. This last name has given some trouble to critics; it has perhaps undergone corruption during the many hundred years that the writings of Ammianus lay in manuscript, and it is now perhaps too late to detect the true reading. The class of men described by it are called Vates by other authors, which is by the Greek writers turned into Greek by ΟΥΑΤΗΣ, [ouhates]. It would not be difficult for

[d] Ibid. xxix. 12.

[e] Amm. Marc. xv. 9.

an ignorant copyist to write ΕΥΑΓΗΣ [euhages], which might easily become the form which occurs in Ammianus.

From these accounts it appears, that the religious system of the Druids received its death-blow in Gaul, from the edict of Claudius: but that in Britain, where it also prevailed, it is hardly wonderful that the Romans should not have extirpated it so soon, because it was only in the reign of Claudius that they began to gain a permanent footing in the island. Forty years later the Druids and the female prophetesses, who made profession of the same religious rites, endeavoured, in the isle of Mona or Anglesey, to make a final stand against the army of Suetonius Paullinus. The contest was unfavourable, the sacred groves were destroyed, and the Druids slaughtered without mercy. If the superstition revived afterwards in Britain, history is nevertheless silent on the fact; and we can be consoled for the sudden extirpation of the religion of our forefathers, by the conviction, that a creed so worthless, proscribed by a people generally so liberal as the Romans, could have nothing but what was prejudicial to the happiness and interests of mankind[f].

[f] Pliny [Nat. Hist. xxx. 4.] is the only writer besides Tacitus, who alludes to the Druids in Britain. "Why should I speak thus of an art [magic] which has spread even beyond the sea, and to the extremities of nature? Britain cultivates it with so much enthusiasm, and with so many ceremonies, that we may fancy it was from thence that the art was communicated to the Persians." If this was written after the slaughter of the Druids in Anglesey, which took place in A.D. 68, it shews that the superstition still survived, though it did not attract the attention of historians as before. Richard of Cirencester, who wrote about the year 1400, takes notice of the Druids, but the only new information which he gives us is the interpretation of the names of the British Deities. Mars, he tells us, was called Vitucadrus, or, as it appears in an ancient inscription, Bitucadrus; Victory was called Andate; and Justice, Adraste.

CHAP. XII.

WHETHER CHRISTIANITY WAS INTRODUCED INTO BRITAIN BEFORE A.D. 120.—ST. PAUL—ST. PETER—SIMON ZELOTES—POMPONIA GRÆCINA—CLAUDIA—GILDAS.

It has long been a question among the learned, whether Christianity was introduced into the British isles before the period to which our narrative is now arrived. In order to enter upon this question with a greater chance of bringing it to a satisfactory issue, it seems necessary to take a brief view of the facts, which have come down to us in the Book of the Acts, and in the letters of the Apostles. Not that we shall find in those writings the slightest allusion to Britain, or the most distant notice of its conversion to Christianity: but we shall at all events gather from such a process all the facts which the first teachers of Christianity have recorded concerning their labours, and so be the better prepared to determine, whether the other writers, nearly contemporary with the Apostles, or following them after an interval of many years, are worthy of credit, on the score of their assertions being consistent with the first Christian records, or with the nature of the case.

That Christianity in Europe, like Mohamedanism in Asia and Africa, spread most rapidly through the different countries, and has continued to be the pre-

vailing religion, is a fact so striking in the history of man, that it well deserves to be duly examined and considered by historians of every European country. To trace the smallest source of information, and to gather up every fragment of tradition, which may throw light on the subject, is the imperative duty of every one who writes on the early affairs of Europe. But in fulfilling this task, it is incumbent upon him to exercise the greatest caution and discrimination. To admit a probability as a fact, is a criminal perversion of historic truth, and has been the fertile source of error. In the absence of positive evidence, events must remain in their original uncertainty, and, if possible, in the exact form in which we first meet with them. To alter their appearance, may be highly dangerous to truth, and lead future writers to give a false interpretation of them: hence error is propagated, and mankind are led to adopt a falsehood which suits their tastes or their convenience, but which is entirely the produce of the imagination, having no foundation in fact.

"It is very possible," says Mosheim[a], "that the light of Christianity may have reached Trans-Alpine Gaul, now called France, before the conclusion of the Apostolic age, either by the ministry of the Apostles themselves, or their immediate successors. But we have no records, that mention with certainty the establishment of Christian Churches in this part of Europe before the second century." If this is the case with Gaul, we should naturally conclude that Britain, which was more remote from the original scene of the Apostolic labours, would receive Christian missions at a later period still than Gaul. But this pro-

[a] Eccles. Hist. vol. i. p. 135.

bability, which would be useful to confirm positive evidence, in the absence of all direct testimony, is of little weight. It appears from the New Testament[b], that soon after Christ's crucifixion, the number of His followers amounted to about 120. On the day of Pentecost[c], it is said, that about 3000 souls were added to the Church. This occurred in the same year as the crucifixion, about which authors differ, some placing it, according to our chronology, in the year A.D. 29, whilst others, among whom is Eusebius, bring it down to the year A.D. 33. Within another short space of time, the number of believers is reckoned at 5000[d], either of new converts, or of the whole body. After this,—but of the exact time we are not informed,—there was "a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the Apostles[e]." Then Philip, one of the twelve, preached the Gospel at Samaria[f], and again at Gaza, Azotus, and Cæsarea[g], all within the district of the Holy Land.

To this follows Saul's journey to Damascus[h], whither he went to persecute all Christians whom he should find in that city: but of the date of this journey we have no mention, and it is unsafe to adopt the statements of the chronologists, who, writing after many

[b] Acts i. 15. [c] Acts ii. 41. [d] Acts iv. 4.

[e] Acts viii. 1. The difficulty of ascertaining the date in these cases arises from the use of those vague expressions, *And in those days, &c.* Acts vi. 1. *At that time,* Acts viii. 1, &c. To this cause is justly ascribed the impossibility of reducing the events recorded in the Gospels to chronological order.

[f] Acts viii. 5. [g] Acts viii. 26. [h] Acts ix. 1.

years, have, for the sake of order and harmony, affixed that year which seemed to them to suit the history with the greatest semblance of truth. This journey, however, ended in Saul's conversion; and at a later date he exchanged his name from Saul to Paul, by which he is more generally known.

After his return to Jerusalem, and subsequent journey to Tarsus, his native city, "the Churches had rest[i] throughout all Judæa, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." The journeys of Peter to Lydda and Joppa, and of Barnabas to Antioch, need not detain us; but the mention of Agabus, who foretold the dearth which happened in the reign of Claudius, enables us to fix the foregoing events as having probably preceded the year A.D. 41, in which that emperor succeeded to the throne.

About that time, Herod Agrippa, appointed king by Claudius, persecuted the Church, and put to death James the brother of John[k]. Soon afterwards, Barnabas and Paul set out together on their first mission through Asia, and visited Seleucia, Cyprus, Antioch in Pisidia, Perga in Pamphylia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, Phœnicia, and Galilee[l].

Shortly after this first journey, Paul and Barnabas quarrelled, and parted company. Barnabas with Mark, about whom the quarrel had arisen, sailed to Cyprus: Paul chose Silas for his future associate[m], and visited Phrygia, Galatia, Mysia, and Troas. Here they crossed into Europe, and visited Philippi, Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, Beræa, Athens, and Corinth, where

[i] Acts ix. 31. [k] Acts xii. 1. [l] Acts xiii. xiv.
[m] Acts xv. 39, &c.

he remained a year and six months[n]; sailing thence to Asia, where he remained about two years[o], principally at Ephesus. After this, in consequence of the uproar made against him by the votaries of Diana, headed by Demetrius the silversmith, Paul left Ephesus, and again crossed to Macedonia and Greece; but after remaining there three months, he returned to Troas, and touching at the islands and cities which lie along the Asiatic coast, Assos, Mitylene, Chios, Samos, Miletus, Ephesus, Cos, Rhodes and Patara, Tyre, Ptolemais, and Cæsarea, he lastly reached Jerusalem in time to assist at the celebration of the Passover[p].

A short time after the arrival of Paul, tumults arose on his account at Jerusalem, and at the end of two more years, Felix the procurator of Judæa was recalled by Nero, and Porcius Festus was appointed in his place. It was by this Festus, in conjunction with King Agrippa, that Paul was sent to Rome to be heard before the tribunal of Cæsar, to which he had appealed. The time occupied by the voyage, the shipwreck, and the three months' delay at Melite, may have occupied nearly half a year, and the last fact recorded in the book of the Acts is, that on his arrival at Rome, Paul "dwelt two whole years" there "in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him."

These last words, "no man forbidding him," lead us with some degree of certainty to conclude, that St. Paul came to Rome, before the persecution of

[n] Acts xviii. 11. [o] Acts xix. 10. [p] Acts xxi. 17.

the Christians, which took place in A.D. 64, being the eleventh year of Nero's reign[1]; but whether his stay in Rome occupied the last two years immediately preceding the breaking out of that persecution, is a point about which different writers have formed different opinions. But it is satisfactorily shewn by Clinton, in his Fasti Romani, that, if St. Paul perished, as is related by ecclesiastical writers, in a persecution of the Christians at Rome by Nero, he perished in the year 65, and not at a later period, during a supposed second visit to the capital.

Of the events which marked the progress of Christianity, and by which it was propagated after the year 64, the books of the New Testament give us little or no information. St. Paul's Epistles are estimated to have been written, some earlier, and some a little later, than his imprisonment at Rome, but these opinions are mere conjectures, and adduce no positive testimony for their support. It is also of little use to enquire what progress had been made in the teaching of Christianity by the other Apostles, for no contemporary records of them remain. It is evident, from the conclusion of St. Peter's first Epistle, that the writer was then at, or near, Babylon, and the mention of his son Marcus seems to imply that he was settled there with his family; for to suppose that Rome is designated under the name of Babylon, and that Marcus was the Apostle's son, only as a convert and by reason of his piety, is inconsistent with the plain words of the narrative, which is of the most simple character, and has nothing in it either of metaphor or allegory. But, if we are to believe ecclesiastical writers, St. Peter was

[1] Tacitus, Annals, xv. 44.

afterwards put to death in Rome A.D. 65, together with St. Paul[r].

We are equally in the dark concerning the adventures which befel James, Jude, and John, notwithstanding that Epistles still remain, said to have been written by them, and that the book of Revelation is said to have been written by John no less than thirty years after the period when the history of the Acts terminates. Nothing, however, occurs in any of these writings which will lead us to the knowledge which we are seeking, nor will it avail us to recur to the Epistles of St. Paul, in the hope of finding any thing contained therein which will throw light upon the latter portion of his life.

In his Epistle to the Hebrews, written, according to the subscription found at the end of it, from Italy by Timothy[s], Paul expresses his intention of going to Judæa[t].

In his Epistle to Titus[u], he alludes to having been in Crete: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting."

In his Epistle to the Philippians[x], he says, "Having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith:" which words have been adduced to authorize the in-

[r] See Clinton's Fasti Romani, p. 46, and the authorities there quoted.

[s] These subscriptions cannot be depended upon, for they often contradict statements found in the body of the writing: but further, great doubts have always been entertained of the genuineness of the Epistle to the Hebrews, principally because in its style of commencement it differs from all the other Epistles of St. Paul.

[t] Heb. xiii. 23. [u] Tit. i. 5. [x] Phil. i. 25.

ference that he probably visited Corinth and Philippi in the year 65[r]."

[r] The author of "Researches into the ecclesiastical and political state of Ancient Britain, under the Roman Emperors, 2 vols. 8vo. London, Cadell, 1843," has the following passage on the supposed travels of St. Paul, after his first imprisonment at Rome. The reader will perceive that it is based on the supposition of St. Paul's having suffered during a second visit to Rome, and is, of course, inconsistent with the chronology of Mr. Fynes Clinton. "After sojourning in other cities of Greece, he arrived at Nicopolis in Epirus, towards the end of the autumn of the year 65, and thence addressed his Epistle to Titus. In Nicopolis he passed the winter. (Tit. iii. 12.) In the beginning of the year 66, he probably visited Judæa, and afterwards Troas; at which last place he left, as he tells us, the cloak with Carpus, together with his books and parchments. (2 Tim. iv. 13.) From Troas he proceeded, I think, to Colosse, and thence to the neighbouring city of Laodicea; from which last place, as the subscription tells us, he addressed his first Epistle to Timotheus. From Laodicea, the Apostle proceeded to Miletus; in which city he left Trophimus sick, and departed himself on his final journey to Rome. It is not probable that the Apostle visited Ephesus upon this occasion, or indeed at all, after his first imprisonment at Rome. I know that some writers have supposed that the fact was otherwise, from an expression to Timotheus in his first Epistle. "I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia." But surely such a request might have been conveyed to Timotheus, by a message from the Apostle from Crete or Corinth. I think, moreover, that the very solemn expression used by St. Paul some years before at Miletus, "I know that ye shall see my face no more," renders it improbable that he should again have visited Ephesus. The immediate object of St. Paul's second and last journey to Rome is not known. But, as the persecution under Nero had for a time abated, he might naturally desire to visit a city in which he had many converts—a city which offered so wide a field for his Christian labours, and where the circumstances of the infant Church might particularly require his presence. He might also wish to converse with St. Peter, who is supposed to have arrived at Rome a little before this period. Nero was at this time absent from his capital; but had delegated his authority to Helius, a wretch who too nearly resembled his master. The perse-

But these passages, and a few others which might be mentioned, are too vague to allow of our deriving from them any reasonable probability that the Apostle visited these places, and we may conclude generally, from the review here made of the books of the New Testament, that they do not warrant the assertion, that the Apostolic labours were extended beyond the countries of Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy, before the year of our Lord 64, or about the thirty-first year after the crucifixion.

Let us turn to other writers who have come next in order to the times of the Apostles. The first of these is Clement of Rome, as he is styled, who is the supposed author of two Epistles to the Corinthians, and is said to have been the disciple of Saint Luke: "Through zeal," says he[1], "Paul obtained the reward of endurance, having been several times loaded with chains, banished, stoned; and having preached both in the east and in the west, he carried a noble reputation for his faith, having instructed the whole world in righteousness, and arrived at the extremity of the west; and, having suffered martyrdom under the præfects, he thus quitted this world, and proceeded to the heavenly places, after having been a most signal example of patience." It has been said by some, that by the west are meant the British isles; but such an interpretation does not merit a serious answer, and we must

cution of the Christians was, upon the return of Nero, renewed with greater violence than at first. St. Paul, who had been apprehended, and probably consigned to the Mamertine prison, was now subjected to severer confinement than upon the former occasion. . . . . Although a difference of opinion exists on the subject, it is most probable that St. Paul suffered martyrdom in the year 67, the last year of the monster Nero."

[1] Clem. Rom. Ep. I. ad Corinth. cap. 5. in Patres Apostolici.

pass over another 100 years, until we come to Tertullian, who lived about the year 200. He has the following passage in his work against the Jews[a]: "For on whom have all nations believed, except in Christ, who is already come? On whom also other nations have believed, Parthians, Jews, and the rest; also the various tribes of the Getulians, many tracts of the Moors, all the borders of Spain, the different nations of Gaul, and of the British isles, places inaccessible to the Romans, but in submission to Christ."

Thirty years after Tertullian, comes Origen, who briefly alludes to the island of Britain in the two following passages: "For when did the land of Britain ever unite in the belief of one God, before Christ came[b]?" And again, "The virtue of our Lord and Saviour is with those also who are separated from our world in Britain, and with those who are in Mauritania, and with all under the sun who have believed on His Name[c]."

The next ecclesiastical writer from whom we might have expected a notice of the conversion of Britain, if it had taken place in the times of the Apostles, is Eusebius; who merely says in his Ecclesiastical History[d], "What need is there to speak of Paul, who, having fulfilled his evangelical office from Jerusalem even to Illyricum, at length suffered martyrdom at Rome under Nero." Another opportunity was afforded him in his Evangelical Demonstration: but his language is alike vague and unsatisfactory: "That some of them [the disciples] should reach the Roman territory .... and that others should cross the ocean to the isles called

[a] Tertull. adv. Jud. 7. vol. ii. p. 448. ed. Delarue.
[b] Euseb. Hist. Ecc. iii. 1.
[b] Orig. Comment. in Matth.
[c] Ejusdem operis pag. 939.

Bretannic, I can no longer think to be the work of man, much less of poor and mean men, least of all of deceivers and impostors[e]."

Seventy years later than Eusebius flourished Chrysostom, whose voluminous writings furnish us with two passages only, which bear the slightest allusion to the British isles; and though they both concern the introduction of Christianity into these islands, yet the writer confines himself to a few words of general signification. "For the British isles also," says he, "which lie beyond this sea of ours, and are situated in the very ocean, have felt the power of the word. For there also churches and altars have been established[f]."—Wherever you go, to the Indians, to the Moors, to the Britons, to the whole world, you will find, "In the beginning was the word, and a virtuous life[g]."

Neither do we find more than two notices of Britain in the works of Jerome, who lived at the same time, and has left behind him three times as many writings as Chrysostom. "The Briton," says he, "separated from our world, if he has made much progress in religion, leaves the western sun, and seeks a place [Jerusalem] that he knows only by report, and the authority of the holy Scriptures[h]." And again, "The heavenly mansion is equally open from Jerusalem and from Britain[i]." But in a passage of another work, the same writer, in speaking of St. Paul's travels, might have had an excellent opportunity of declaring that the Apostle had been in Britain, if it had been the received opinion in Jerome's own time, that that island received Christianity from St. Paul. "Having

[e] Euseb. Dem. Evan. iii. 7.
[f] Chrysost. con. Jud.
[g] Chrysost. Serm. in Pen.
[h] Hieron. Epist. 44.
[i] Hieron. Epist. 49.

been in Spain," says the writer, " St. Paul went from one ocean to another, imitating the motion and course of the Sun of Righteousness, of whom it is said, ' His going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it;' and that his diligence in preaching extended as far as the earth itself[k]." In another passage, Jerome says, that " St. Paul, after his imprisonment, preached the Gospel in the western parts[l]."

But all these modes of expression are too indefinite to admit of the inference that St. Paul, or any other Apostle, ever visited the shore of Britain. On the contrary, it may with great probability be urged, that the Greek writer Jerome, and others also, meant no other than Italy or Spain, by the expression " the western parts."

The next writer is Theodoret, who comes about fifty years after Jerome. We may quote the following passages, as bearing upon our subject. " Afterwards he [Paul] arrived in Italy, and proceeding from thence to Spain, extended his aid to the islands which are situated in the sea[m]." " And they [the disciples] have persuaded not only the Romans, and those subjected to their control, but also the Scythian and Sarmatian nations, the Indians..... Britons, Cimbri, and Germans, and, to speak briefly, every nation and tribe of men, to receive the precepts of Him who was crucified[n]." " And there came many who dwelt in the farthest districts of the west, both Spaniards and Britons, the Gauls also who occupy the space between them[o]."

[k] Hieron. in Amos. c. v. iii. col. 1412. [l] Hieron. de Script. Eccles. tom. iv. part. 2. [m] Comm. in Psalm 116. [n] Relig. Hist. c. 36. [o] Serm. 9. de legibus.

These extracts form "the most decided opinion of any expressed by ancient ecclesiastical writers: but even this does not enable us, with the least degree of certainty, to claim St. Paul as the Apostle who preached the Gospel in Britain[p]."

Neither is the authority of Dorotheus, or rather of the author who assumes his name, of sufficient weight to induce us to receive his statement about Simon the Zealot, which, if true, would invalidate all that has been said before in relation to St. Paul.

"Simon the Zealot," says this writer, "having passed through all Mauritania, and the region of the Africans, and preached Christ, was afterwards crucified by them in Britain, and being made perfect by martyrdom, was there buried[q]."

This assertion, so boldly made by the writer at the distance of nearly 500 years after the event, and without the slightest authority of any preceding writer, is by all means to be rejected from the page of history, and must be classed among those audacious fables with which the first annals of the Christian religion have unfortunately been overlaid.

To the same class of pious frauds, as they have been termed, but, as they would more justly be named, "of impious falsehoods," is to be referred the following extract from the Greek Menologies, a species of almanac, of which many varieties occur in collections of ancient manuscripts, but they are of a late date, and not to be received as authoritative in a question of this kind.

"The divine Apostle of Christ, Aristobulus, was

bishops to every district, he ordained Aristobulus also, and sent him to the country of the Britons, who were wild and savage men, destitute of the faith. Nevertheless, he went and preached Christ; and though he was sometimes beaten, at others dragged through the streets, and at others made a laughing stock, yet he persuaded many to come to Christ, and to be baptized. After which, having erected a church and ordained elders [presbyters or priests] and deacons therein, he ended his days."

A second extract from the Greek Menologies, irreconcilable, it would appear, with the former, is as follows: "He [Peter] then went to Britain: where, making a long stay, and turning many of the nameless nations there to the faith of Christ, he beheld an angelic vision . . . and having glorified and given thanks to God for it, and having remained certain days in Britain, and enlightened many with the word of grace, having erected churches and appointed bishops, priests, and deacons; in the twelfth year of Cæsar [Nero], he again returned to Rome."

These are all the passages extracted from ancient writers, in which notice is taken of the British isles, in respect of their first conversion to Christianity, down to the sixth century of the Christian era. Four hundred years later we have the assertion of Simeon Metaphrastes, that St. Peter spent twenty-three years at Rome, in Britain, and in other countries of the west; and in particular that he resided long in Britain, where he converted many nations, founded many churches, and ordained bishops, presbyters, and deacons, and that he returned to Rome in the twelfth year of the emperor Nero, i. e. in A. D. 65—66. This account, however, is of no more authority than that of Dorotheus, or of

the Greek Menologies, as it is given by a writer of the tenth century, and receives not the slightest support from preceding historians.

After what has been advanced, the reader will probably come to the conclusion that neither St. Paul, St. Peter, Simon Zelotes, or any other Apostle, preached the Gospel in Britain, and that the continual wars which arose between its inhabitants and their Roman invaders, were not likely to leave much room for the peaceful tenets of Christianity, before the commencement of the second century. But the assertions which the monks have ventured to make on this subject are of a most extraordinarily bold and impudent character. Whilst some of them gladly availed themselves of the few historical notices which we have been discussing, others in defiance, it would seem, of truth, and in contempt of historical authority, have not hesitated to claim Joseph of Arimathæa, and others, as the first preachers of the Gospel in Britain. Archbishop Usher devotes the whole of a long chapter to the investigation of this question. But here, as well as in other parts of his work, the Primate "seems to forget the maxim of Euripides, whom himself had quoted with approbation:

——σώφρονος δ' ἀπιστίας
Οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν χρησιμώτερον βροτοῖς.
Nothing to mortal man more safe
Than wise distrust.

Bishop Stillingfleet, Dr. Henry, and others, have so completely exposed these fictions of the Glastonbury monks, that they cannot require any further refutation[r]."

[r] Thackeray, vol. i. p. 84.

Without therefore wasting words on what appears so little to deserve attention, let us proceed to consider the case of certain ladies who are said to have been resident at Rome at the time of St. Paul's captivity, and by whose agency, it has been thought, the Britons may first have been converted to the Christian faith. The first of these was Pomponia Græcina, wife of Aulus Plautius, the first Roman governor in Britain, and the general whose arms had so much contributed to the conquest of the island. The account which Tacitus gives us of this lady is as follows: "Pomponia Græcina, an illustrious lady, the wife of Aulus Plautius, (who, upon his return from Britain, had been honoured with an ovation,) being accused of having embraced a foreign superstition, her trial was committed to her husband. He, according to the ancient institutions of Rome, having made solemn enquiry in the presence of her relations, respecting any charges affecting her life and reputation, pronounced her innocent. After this, Pomponia's life was protracted through a long course of melancholy years[a]." It has been thought, that the foreign superstition which Pomponia had embraced was Christianity, for it is argued, that the same writer elsewhere describes the religion of the Christians as a superstition, and that by the long course of melancholy years in which her life terminated, he means no more than to describe the apparent asceticism with which the Christians abstained from the public shows and festivities. Those who argue that Pomponia had become a Christian, suppose that she must, from her having been in Britain with her husband, have felt an interest in its welfare, and have exerted herself to communicate

[a] Tac. Ann. xiii. c. 32.

to the natives the same beneficent doctrines which she had herself embraced. But this series of probabilities is too loosely connected to stand the test of criticism. It is in the first place far from certain, that the historian designates Christianity by the terms, "a foreign superstition," for the religions of the Egyptians, and of many other nations, were equally characterised by the Romans as superstitions, because they were more debased than the forms which prevailed generally among themselves. But a more fatal objection to the argument arises from the comparison of dates. Pomponia was accused of having embraced a foreign superstition in the year 58, but Saint Paul did not arrive in Rome until five years later, and it is not likely, according to what we read in the Acts of the Apostles, that any other Christian missionaries had preceded him. If it were necessary to pursue the argument, it would be difficult to prove that Aulus Plautius and Pomponia Græcina were married when Plautius commanded the army in Britain, or that Pomponia Græcina was ever in our island at all; so that her supposed interest in its inhabitants assumes a very shadowy character, and the wish to communicate to them the benefits of Christianity would, in all human probability, have but little influence with one, who, if ever in Britain, must have thought it a country of rude barbarians, and must in the course of ten years, since her return to Rome, have almost forgotten its existence. We can hardly suppose, that the first teachers and the first converts to Christianity adopted the preposterous conduct of our modern missionaries, who, neglecting vice and misery of the deepest dye at home, expend their own overflowing feelings, and

exhaust the treasures of the benevolent, in carrying their deeds of charity to the Negro and the Hindoo.

Let us proceed to examine the case of the other Lady, who is said to have contributed to the conversion of Britain to Christianity. This was Claudia Rufina, spoken of by Martial in the following lines:

> Claudia, of azure-painted Britons born,
> What Latian wit and Latian grace adorn!
> Such forms might Rome among her daughters place,
> Or Attic matrons deem of Attic race[t].

From these expressions, it is probable that this Claudia was not a native of Britain, but the daughter of British parents, who were then living as hostages at Rome. From another epigram of Martial it appears, that the same Claudia was married to a person of the name of Pudens:

> O Rufus! Pudens, whom I own my friend,
> Has ta'en the foreign Claudia for his wife.
> Propitious Hymen! light thy torch, and send
> Long years of bliss to their united life[u]."

We learn also from some other lines of this author, that Pudens was one who constrained the poet to correct any verses which he deemed too licentious:

> Pudens, at thy request again,
> O how can I refuse
> To take up my correcting pen,
> And check my erring muse!

From the same poet we may infer, that the father-in-law of Pudens was a man of even more serious character than himself[x]:

> Rufus, forbear, I pr'ythee, friend,
> My verses to your father to commend:

[t] Martial, Epig. xi. 54. [u] Martial, Epig. iv. 13. [x] Martial, Epig. vii. 66. Thackeray, vol. i. p. 96.

A graver strain perhaps he may approve,
As what his graver feelings love.

These facts have led critics to infer, that Pudens and his wife Claudia are the same who are mentioned by Saint Paul in his second Epistle to Timothy: "Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren." And it must be confessed, that the supposition appears at first sight reasonable. It may perhaps be observed, that there appears no reason why the names of Pudens and Claudia should be separated by St. Paul if they were man and wife; but this argument is not altogether conclusive, neither does chronology permit any objection to the identification of these two persons. For Martial came to reside at Rome in the sixth year of Nero, about four years before St. Paul was brought prisoner from Judæa. But this circumstance, whilst it renders the identity of Pudens and Claudia by no means impossible, yet adds no force whatever to its probability, which is founded upon too narrow a basis to enable us to speak with certainty. The inference which may be fairly drawn from the argument amounts to no more than the fact, that a Roman lady, whose parents were British, embraced Christianity together with her husband. But that Claudia used any influence in converting to Christianity the distant country from which her parents drew their birth, is an inference which no principles of historical truth will warrant us in drawing.

It remains therefore to examine a passage in the work of Gildas, the British historian, who has left us a short summary of some events which had occurred previous to the sixth century, when he lived and wrote. After alluding in vague and general terms to the

Roman conquest of Britain, and its transformation to the condition of a Roman province, he has this passage:

"In the mean time, on this island—benumbed with icy coldness, and by a long tract of lands removed from the visible sun—that true Sun, not the sun of the temporal firmament, but the Sun of the highest arch of Heaven, existing before all time, which manifested its brightness to the whole world during the latter part of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, when, as we know, his religion was spread without impediment, though against the will of the Senate, the emperor threatening death to those who should accuse the soldiers of Jesus Christ—that true Sun, Christ, bestowed his rays, that is, his precepts."

From this passage, which it is almost impossible to put intelligibly into English, we can infer no more than that whilst the Roman power was being consolidated in Britain, the Christian religion, which took its origin from the latter part of the reign of Tiberius, was introduced into our island. But the precise period is not named, and the words of Gildas are applicable to almost any period until the latter part of the second century.

We may therefore here briefly sum up the results of this enquiry. It appears, that we have no record of the introduction of Christianity into Britain, or even of its existence in the island, down to the year 120, when Hadrian erected his wall to keep off the Caledonians. It may, however, be conceded as highly probable, that many Roman soldiers who served in Britain, or merchants who came for traffic, may have been converted as individuals to the Christian faith; but that any public mission had been sent, or general

attempt been made, to convert the natives, may indeed enter into the human imagination to conceive, but is entirely beyond the reach of history to prove, and is completely at variance with the general character of events which were then passing in Britain, and which form the subject of our previous narrative.

CHAP. XIII.

REIGNS OF ANTONINUS PIUS—MARCUS AURELIUS—COMMODUS—LOLLIUS URBICUS—ULPIUS MARCELLUS—AND CLODIUS ALBINUS, GOVERNORS OF BRITAIN—LUCIUS, ONE OF THE TRIBUTARY KINGS OF THE BRITONS, CONVERTED TO CHRISTIANITY.

THE reigns of Trajan and Hadrian, prolonged to a greater duration than that of any of their predecessors, conferred inestimable benefits upon the whole empire, and probably averted for a time the tendency to decay to which it was rapidly hastening. It is also rather remarkable, that the virtuous emperors, who left behind them the love and regrets of their people, occur in many instances in a continued series, unbroken by the intervention of any of those monsters who at other times occupied and disgraced the imperial throne. In no instance is this observation more remarkable, than in the reigns of Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines, who ruled the Roman empire in comparative peace and happiness during the period of eighty-one years[a]. It has been shrewdly remarked, that those nations are the happiest which have no historians, for history delights in descriptions of blood and battles, which bring suffering to the people, whilst their annals are adorned with laurels. If we may apply this principle to our present

[a] From 99 to 180.

subject, it may be inferred, that Britain participated in the happiness which the four good emperors conferred upon the whole world. If, however, happiness was not the lot of the provincials in Britain, it is certain that they enjoyed a greater portion of tranquillity than at any previous or succeeding period. The annals of our country are exceedingly scanty during the whole of this time, and it is next to impossible to make out a continuous narrative.

Hadrian died in the year 138, and was succeeded by Antoninus Pius, who is held up to us by writers as one of the most virtuous of men, and most beneficent of monarchs. It is in the hands of such a ruler that arbitrary power shews itself with the most grace: because, under the administration of such a master, virtue is then most sure of its reward, and vice seldom is allowed to go unpunished. Though Antoninus could not be present every where in his vast dominions, yet his influence extended into the most distant parts; and we are assured, that the largest and fairest portion of the world, which owned the rule of Antoninus, prospered under his benevolent government to an extent that had never been reached since the days of the first emperor Augustus.

But Antoninus never visited Britain, nor have we more than the briefest notices of the island during his reign. It has been said, that he maintained a fleet in Britain, of which Seius Saturninus was admiral: but for this assertion, our only authority is taken from a legal case quoted in the Roman laws from Javolenus, and is as follows:

"Seius Saturninus, *archigubernus*, [which may be interpreted either chief-pilot, or ship-master, as well as admiral,] and belonging to the British fleet, by a

fiduciary testament left Valerius Maximus, captain of a trireme, his heir, requesting of him to give up the inheritance to Saturninus's son, Seius Oceanus, as soon as he should arrive at the age of sixteen. But Seius Oceanus died before he reached the required age; and Mallius Seneca, who called himself the uncle of Seius Oceanus, claimed the inheritance by virtue of proximity of blood. But the captain, Valerius Maximus, retained the property for his own, on the plea of the youth being dead, to whom he was to have surrendered it."

It is manifest that this passage contains nothing more than a point of law, arising between two private individuals, and furnishes no grounds for supposing that Seius Saturninus held any important naval command in Britain. But we have two brief notices of what passed in Britain during the reign of Antoninus, which require a more deliberate notice. The Grecian geographer, Pausanias, who wrote at the time, says, "that Antoninus cut off more than half of the territory of the Brigantes in Britain, because they had invaded the tribe of Genuni, who were tributary to the Romans[b]." We learn also from the Augustan historian, Capitolinus, that Lollius Urbicus was the Roman lieutenant at this time in Britain, and that having expelled the northern barbarians, he erected a strong rampart of turf across the island to restrain their future incursions[c]. Now, as the Brigantes are universally supposed to have occupied the north-western parts of England, to the south of the wall previously built by Hadrian, from Tynemouth to Bowness, we are led to suppose that, though thus included in the Roman province, they were suffered still to have their

[b] Paus. viii. 43. [c] Capitolinus De Anton. Pio, ch. 5.

own rulers, and the right to govern themselves, in subordination to the Roman supremacy. It is useless to conjecture what cause may have led the Brigantes to assail another British tribe, the Genuni; but we may with reason imagine, that the northern barbarians, beyond the wall, would gladly avail themselves of the discord of the provincial Britons to renew the war. But the Roman arms were still victorious, and the Roman province was again extended to the narrow line of frontier which lies between the friths of Forth and Clyde. This was the limit anciently of the conquests of Agricola; and, though Hadrian had for a moment receded to a nearer and safer limit, yet it is believed, and with reason, that the successes of Lollius Urbicus recovered the large tract of territory which had been abandoned to the barbarians [d].

Thus, though Antoninus Pius never set foot in our island, the glory of the Roman arms received a sensible augmentation in his reign, the lustre of which extended to himself, as the panegyrist Eumenius states it in his oration to Constantine, delivered a hundred and forty years later. "How refined was the good fortune of those emperors, who, sitting in their palaces at Rome, earned splendid triumphs and titles of honour from the nations which their generals subdued. Thus Fronto, second to none, but rather a revival of the ancient Roman eloquence, in giving to Antoninus the credit of happily finishing the war in Britain, bears witness, that he remained at home in his palace, and delegating his auspices to another, sat, as it were, at

[d] The classical notices of the different walls built in Britain to exclude the Caledonians are extremely meagre. The reader is referred to Camden, Horsley, and other authorities, for more information on this subject.

the helm of the expedition, and merited the glory of its success[a]."

Lollius Urbicus, the victorious governor of Britain, returned to Rome, where he became prefect of the city, and in that capacity was connected with the persecution of the Christians which shortly afterwards was begun.

The emperor Antoninus died in the year 161, after a reign of twenty-three years, and was succeeded by Marcus Aurelius, who married Faustina, the daughter of his predecessor. The new emperor united the qualities of a philosopher with those of a ruler: but suspicions have been thrown upon his integrity under both these appellations. The persecution of the Christians which, if not commanded by Aurelius, took place with his tacit consent, was a blot upon the fair reputation of his reign, which his profession of philosophy serves to aggravate rather than to efface. But the principles of true liberality were little known at that time, nor was it until the Christians had in their turn become the persecutors, and many an unhappy heathen or heretic writhed beneath tortures imposed in the name of the mild and merciful Jesus, that mankind have at last come to the conviction, that religion is a matter between man and his Maker, and not to be coerced or regulated by politicians.

Marcus Aurelius was hardly seated on the throne, before the barbarians of Caledonia in Britain, and of Germany on the continent of Europe, were reported to be in arms, and on the point of invading the empire in large numbers. The emperor adopted prompt measures to meet the revolt. Aufidius Victorinus was dispatched against the Germans, and Calpurnius Agri-

[a] Eumenius Paneg. Const. dict. c. 10.

cola was sent to take the command of the troops in Britain. The name of this general was in itself an omen of triumph; but we are not informed with what success he conducted the war against the Caledonians, or administered the affairs of the province. Nothing more occurs in history concerning events in Britain, until the death of Aurelius, and the accession of his worthless son Commodus, in the year of our Lord 180. This young man probably owed the selfish brutality of his character to the indulgent education which he had received from his parents. His mother Faustina, a model of female beauty, was more famed for the levities than the matronly virtues of her sex; and, though the harshness of Stoicism is not required to form the manners and discipline the mind of youth, yet the young prince probably saw enough of his mother's love of gratification and of his father's indifference, to produce in his mind that inordinate selfishness which made himself the centre of all his thoughts, and the happiness of his people of no moment in comparison with his own personal gratifications.

War sprung up on all sides to embarrass the reign of the young emperor. The barbarians beyond Dacia took up arms, but were successfully encountered by Niger and Albinus, who afterwards disputed with Severus the possession of the Roman empire. But the most serious war which arose was in Britain, where the nations of the north passed the Roman wall which separated them from the province, and committed most extensive depredations. One Roman general who opposed them was cut to pieces with all his men; and when the intelligence was conveyed to Commodus at Rome, he was so alarmed, that Ulpius Marcellus was sent in haste to take the command of the armies in

Britain, and to oppose the further march of the invaders.

This general was a man of strong and extraordinary character: in his private mode of living, he was moderate and frugal; and in both his food and dress recalled to mind the manly practices of the ancient Roman soldier. In military service, he conducted himself with remarkable nobleness of mind, and greatness of purpose. His integrity was undoubted, for he was entirely inaccessible to a bribe; but in personal manner he was any thing but mild or gentle. For vigilance, he was a model to all commanders, and could do with surprisingly little sleep at night; this made him anxious to render his officers equally alert and active as himself. To effect this object, he used to practise a singular stratagem: he caused twelve tablets to be made of soft wood, and on these he every evening wrote instructions to be sent round to his officers; but he took care that these tablets should be delivered at different hours of the night, in order that they might be impressed with the supposition that their commander was always awake, and so might themselves be more alert and ready for active service. His own indifference to sleep was the result of long habit, and was strengthened by the extraordinary moderation of his diet. He never partook of any food in large quantities, and the bread which he ate was such as had been brought with him from Rome, not because he disliked the bread of the province where he happened to be, but that the staleness of the article might prevent him from carrying his appetite beyond the smallest quantity that would support nature: for his gums, naturally weak, bled if he ate a large quantity of stale bread; and this was a peculiarity which he

rather encouraged, that he might keep himself ever active and vigilant.

Such was Ulpius Marcellus, a man who seems to have equalled the ancient heroes of Rome or Sparta; and the Caledonians felt the effects of so stern a disciplinarian. They met with terrible reverses; and peace was restored to Britain. But Ulpius Marcellus was speedily recalled from his government; for his extraordinary personal merits rendered him an object of alarm and suspicion to Commodus; and after running a narrow risk of losing his head in return for his public services, he with much difficulty escaped into private life[f].

After the recal of Marcellus, a serious sedition broke out in Britain, in consequence of the iniquitous manner in which appointments were made to offices of trust in the army, and perhaps also from the relaxation of discipline which ensued on the removal of their general. Perennis, the corrupt and abandoned favourite of Commodus, had so much influence with the emperor, that he was able to do what he liked in nearly all the departments of the state. He offended the soldiers in Britain, by displacing the men of senatorial rank from the commands which they had always held, and placing in their room younger men taken from the equestrian rank[g]. The soldiers naturally looked to the minister of state as the cause of their grievances, and were violently enraged against Perennis. To obtain redress for their injuries, they chose out fifteen hundred men, and sent them to lay their petition at the foot of the throne, and to ask for relief. This formidable deputation succeeded in the object of their mission; no one was disposed to molest them, for their appearance and

[f] Xiphilinus, lxxii. 8. [g] Lampridius in V. Commodi, c. 6.

pretensions were peaceable, and the emperor was not a favourite with his subjects. The soldiers arrived at the gates of Rome without molestation, and Commodus went out to meet them. "Of all petitions, those of a military class are most likely to be heard by a tyrant. The complaints against Perennis, although probably much exaggerated, proved fatal to the minister. He was delivered over to his accusers, who first scourged, and then beheaded him," in the year of our Lord 186[h].

This concession of the emperor did not, however, entirely allay the sedition in Britain: the soldiers continued in a mutinous state, and the emperor's authority in the island seemed likely to be set aside altogether. In this critical state of affairs, Publius Helvius Pertinax, who afterwards succeeded Commodus on the throne, was appointed to take the command, and restore tranquillity to the province[i]. Pertinax was a man of merit, for no one without great talents has ever forced his way from a private station to a throne; he was of humble origin, but had been well brought up; and though remarkable for a mild and merciful disposition, he possessed great military abilities, and well maintained his authority over those whom he commanded. In allaying the seditious spirits of the army in Britain, Pertinax was eminently successful, though he had peculiar difficulties to encounter, from the effects of which he did not get off unscathed. The disaffected troops were prepared to disclaim the authority of Commodus, and invited Pertinax himself to become their emperor. But the general was too prudent to undertake this dangerous honour: he is said to have incurred odium for having warned Commodus against two other

[h] Xiphilinus, lxxii. 9. Thackeray, vol. i. p. 163. [i] Jul. Capit. Pertin. 2.

persons, Antistius Burrus, and Arrius Antoninus, as not unlikely to entertain views hostile to the reigning prince. This charge, however, was never proved; and it is not of sufficient weight to counterbalance the real merits of Pertinax, who reduced the soldiers to obedience; though at imminent personal risk to himself. One of the legions broke out into open violence, and Pertinax, bravely opposing himself to their fury, was wounded so severely, that he was left for dead upon the field.

This outrage, we are told, was never forgotten; and the legion paid most dearly for it. It is not, however, to be wondered at, that so hazardous a position among disaffected soldiers was not pleasant to Pertinax: he petitioned the emperor to be released from the command of soldiers, who were enraged against him personally on account of the severe discipline which he had introduced. This petition was acceded to: Pertinax was recalled, and, after discharging a civic office[k] at Rome, he was made proconsul of Africa[l].

The next proprætor of Britain was Decimus Clodius Albinus, a man of high birth and pretensions, who was afterwards forced against his will into a contest with the great Severus, for the possession of the throne. His mode of administering the affairs of his government was honourable to himself and advantageous to his country. The soldiers, who were under his command, imbibed an extraordinary regard for his person,

[k] Cura alimentorum.

[l] Capitol. Pert. 3, 4. A curious circumstance is said to have happened at Rome, whilst Pertinax was in Britain. A horse, named Pertinax, gained the victory in the race-course; and this was afterwards quoted as an omen, that the general named Pertinax would be raised to the throne. Like most other prophecies, this prediction was never mentioned till after its accomplishment. Xiphil. lxxiii. 4.

which they afterwards evinced by the zeal with which they devoted their lives to his service, and almost secured for him the empire of the world.

These services procured for Albinus the title of Cæsar[m], which Commodus, who had himself been saluted by the British army with the appellation of Britannicus[n], seems to have conferred without reluctance. But the favour of the emperor was capricious, and a circumstance soon occurred which threw Albinus under a cloud at the Roman Court. A rumour was spread that Commodus was no more, and Albinus, perhaps somewhat hastily, and at all events prematurely, assembled his soldiers, and addressed them on the event which was supposed to have happened. In his speech, which has been rather obscurely recorded, he seems to have made too free with the imperial authority. "When Cæsar," said he, "subdued Britain, he was a senator, but not yet dictator." These words were reported to Commodus, who at once issued orders for the recal of Albinus, and the appointment of one of his own companions Junius Severus, to succeed him in the government[o]. This decree, however, was set aside by the unexpected death of the emperor, whose crimes at length drew down upon him the punishment which they had so long merited.

The reign of this monster, marked by almost every act of vice and tyranny to which a servile people would submit, furnishes at least one subject of interest to the English reader, which we may here pause to consider. It is in the reign of this emperor, we are informed, that the Christian religion was first established in our island. From the examination already instituted in a preced-

[m] Capitol. Alb. 13, 14.
[n] Lampridius, Commod. 8.
[o] Capitol. Albin. 13, 14.

ing chapter, the reader, who attaches due weight to accurate and specific testimony, will have come to the conclusion, that there is no proof of Britain having been converted until the point of the narrative which we have now reached. But whether the authority, on which the conversion of Britain is fixed in the reign of Commodus, is of sufficient weight to authorize its being regarded as an historical fact, is a question which must depend for its solution on a calm and dispassionate enquiry into the evidence, and all the circumstances with which it is surrounded. It is not surprising, that nothing has been recorded on this subject by the historians of Greece and Rome; for Christianity, in the first two centuries, occupied a position much too obscure to attract the notice of the learned. It was a long time before the pagan world could disconnect Christianity from its parent Judaism, of which the Christians were supposed to be a sect; and that part of the religion, which forms in fact its principal feature, was peculiarly liable to misinterpretation in the judgment of heathen critics. Christ, the founder of Christianity, and the Son of God, was pointed out to the world as of a divine nature, and a fit object for the worship of mankind. But this claim would naturally invite a comparison between Christ and the heathen deities; and whilst the common people recognised both as true, the magistrate both equally useful, and the philosopher both false; there was little to attract the notice of any party amid the political changes which in that age were so sudden, and so engrossing of the public attention.

The first writer who mentions king Lucius is Venerable Bede, who, in the fourth chapter of his first book of Ecclesiastical History, writes as follows:

"In the year of our Lord's incarnation 156, Marcus Antoninus Verus, the fourteenth from Augustus, received the empire in conjunction with his brother Aurelius Commodus. In whose reign whilst Eleutherus, a holy man, presided over the Holy Roman See, Lucius, king of the Britons, sent to him a letter, beseeching him to issue a mandate that he might be made a Christian: and afterwards he obtained the object of his pious petition, and the Britons preserved immaculate, and sound, in peace and tranquillity, the faith which they had received, until the reign of the emperor Diocletian."

This passage is open to much criticism, from the numerous inaccuracies which it contains. In the first place, the year 156 was the nineteenth year of Antoninus Pius, who reigned immediately before Marcus Aurelius and his son Commodus, and on the other hand, Eleutherus is supposed not to have been elected Bishop of Rome until the year 173 at the earliest. Thirdly, it is to be observed, that no such emperors as Marcus Antoninus Verus, and his brother Aurelius Commodus, ever reigned at all at Rome: but it is evident, that Venerable Bede has confused together the names of four succeeding emperors, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, his adopted colleague Lucius Verus, and Commodus son of Aurelius, and, out of these four separate persons, has put together two new emperors, whose names no where occur in authentic Roman history. In this confusion we should have one clue to extricate us: the fact that Eleutherus was the pope, to whom, at the request of king Lucius, Britain owed its conversion to Christianity. As his pontificate lies between the thirteenth year of Aurelius, and the sixth of Commodus, we might be justified in setting

aside the errors of Venerable Bede, as of minor importance, and inferring that, as regards the main fact of the mission to Britain, the passage quoted from the ecclesiastical history may contain a basis of truth. But our attention is next due to Nennius, the native British historian, who lived about 100 years after Venerable Bede. He alludes to the story of king Lucius, in these words:

"In the year of our Lord's Incarnation 164, Lucius, king of Britain, together with all the chieftains [regulis] of all Britain, received baptism, an embassy having been sent by the emperors of Rome, and by the Roman pope Evaristus. Lucius was surnamed Lever-maur, i. e. Great Luminary, on account of the Christian faith which was introduced in his time."

This account is entirely at variance with the former. To suppose that any of the Roman emperors who reigned in the second century would be solicitous to convert the Britons to Christianity, is too preposterous to merit criticism: that either of the same emperors would cooperate either for good or bad with the obscure individuals[p], who at that time called themselves Bishops of Rome, is a supposition scarcely less absurd than the former.

A third objection to the account of Nennius is the

[p] We have witnessed in our own times a singular burst of human weakness and delusion in the formation of the sect commonly called Irvingites. With pretensions to miraculous power not inferior to those of the first Christians, they united meekness of conduct and humbleness of life equally remarkable and striking. Their tenets still perhaps linger in secluded situations, until Time, that great healer, shall have effaced from existence the ruffle which the breath of their doctrines has made upon the smooth surface of events. Who can believe, that kings or queens would cooperate with these wild but good men, to propagate truth in distant countries!

extraordinary anachronism by which he introduces Evaristus as living in the year 164, when it is matter of certainty, as far as any thing can be certain about the early Bishops of Rome, that Evaristus died in the year 109, i. e. more than fifty years before the time assigned to the conversion of Britain. These extraordinary differences between historians perplex the judgment, and make it difficult to discriminate between truth and falsehood. Notwithstanding these discrepancies, however, many eminent modern scholars have come to the decision, that king Lucius is a real character, and that the account of his conversion to Christianity is substantially correct. But great suspicion is cast over the whole story by the nefarious forgeries and pious frauds by which the monks of the middle ages have endeavoured to support a doubtful legend. Archbishop Usher says, that he saw two coins, one of silver, the other of gold, bearing the image of a king with a cross, and the letters L U C, an abbreviation for Lucius, engraved upon them. But on examination[q], one of these coins turns out to be a manifest forgery, and the other, if it were known to be still in existence, would no doubt be open to the same charge: besides which, it is well known, that the money which passed in the Roman provinces was coined at the Roman mint, and never bore the head of the kinglets or tributary chieftains, that still retained authority over their petty dominions, in subjection to the Roman supremacy. Another question, which has been raised

[q] "One of these two coins attributed to Lucius, which is of gold, is preserved in the collection of the British Museum; and is a decidedly false one, as Mr. C. F. Barnwell informs me. Of the other, in silver, nothing is known." Rev. J. P. Pantin's preface to Stillingfleet's Orig. Brit. note [r], p. xv. vol. i. ed. Oxon. 1842.

concerning king Lucius, relates to the part of Britain over which he is supposed to have reigned. To this question, from want of information, it is impossible to return a specific answer: but, as Prasutagus and Cogidunus are known to have retained a species of sovereignty in the early ages of the Roman domination, there seems no reason for denying that king Lucius may have held the same subordinate position at the time of which we are now speaking[r]. Of the Welsh

[r] The fabulous history of Geoffrey of Monmouth, in the account of king Lucius, amplifies, as usual, the meagre facts recorded by more authentic historians: the narrative, which is repugnant to the state of things known to exist at that time in Britain, runs as follows: Book I. chap. xix. "Lucius is the first British king that embraces the Christian faith, together with his people.—Coillus had but one son, named Lucius, who, obtaining the crown after his father's decease, imitated all his acts of goodness, and seemed to his people to be no other than Coillus himself revived. As he had made so good a beginning, he was willing to make a better end: for which purpose he sent letters to Pope Eleutherius, desiring to be instructed by him in the Christian religion. For the miracles which Christ's disciples performed in several nations, wrought a conviction in his mind; so that being inflamed with an ardent love of the true faith, he obtained the accomplishment of his pious request. For that holy pope, upon receipt of this devout petition, sent to him two most religious doctors, Faganus and Duvanus, who, after they had preached concerning the incarnation of the Word of God, administered baptism to him, and made him a proselyte to the Christian faith. Immediately upon this, people from all countries, assembling together, followed the king's example, and being washed in the same holy laver, were made partakers of the kingdom of heaven. The holy doctors, after they had almost extinguished paganism over the whole island, dedicated the temples, that had been founded in honour of many gods, to the one only God and His saints, and filled them with congregations of Christians. There were then in Britain eight and twenty flamens, as also three archflamens, to whose jurisdiction the other judges and enthusiasts were subject. These also, according to the apostolic command, they delivered from idolatry, and where they were flamens

versions of this part of our history, found in their Triads and genealogies, it is useless to say much: they partake of the same mendacious love of fiction which has obscured rather than illustrated all the early annals of that people; and as they were composed many hundred

made them bishops, where archflamens, archbishops. The seats of the archflamens were at the three noblest cities, viz. London, York, and the City of Legions, which its old walls and buildings shew to have been situated upon the river Uske in Glamorganshire. To these three, now purified from superstition, were made subject twenty-eight bishops with their dioceses. To the metropolitan of York were subject Deira and Albania, which the great river Humber divides from Loegria. To the metropolitan of London were subject Loegria and Cornwall. These two provinces the Severn divides from Kambria or Wales, which was subject to the City of Legions. Chap. xx. Faganus and Duvanus give an account at Rome, of what they had done in Britain.—At last, when they had made an entire reformation here, the two prelates returned to Rome, and desired the pope to confirm what they had done. As soon as they had obtained a confirmation, they returned again to Britain, accompanied with many others, by whose doctrine the British nation was in a short time strengthened in the faith. Their names and acts are recorded in a book which Gildas wrote concerning the victory of Aurelius Ambrosius; and what is delivered in so bright a treatise, needs not to be repeated here in a meaner style.—Book v. chap. 1. Lucius dies without issue, and is a benefactor to the Churches. In the mean time, the glorious king Lucius, highly rejoiced at the great progress which the true faith and worship had made in his kingdom, and permitted the possessions and territories which formerly belonged to the temples of the gods to be converted to a better use, and appropriated to Christian churches. And because a greater honour was due to them than to the others, he made large additions of lands and manor-houses, and all kinds of privileges to them. Amidst these and other acts of his great piety, he departed this life in the city of Gloucester, and was honourably buried in the Cathedral church, in the hundred and fifty-sixth year after our Lord's incarnation. He had no issue to succeed him, so that after his decease there arose a dissension among the Britons, and the Roman power was much weakened."

years after the event, they are inadmissible into the pages of serious history.

The speculations of some modern writers are not more reasonable than the fictions of the Triads: for whilst the latter represent Lucius as the fourth in descent from Caractacus, Sir Henry Spelman has assigned him a similar place in genealogy from king Arviragus. So easy is it for painters to adorn the most vulgar skeleton, till it represents a countenance that may pass for the likeness of any of the less known characters found in the page of history!

"But the reader"—if I may be allowed to sum up this enquiry in the words of one[1] who has in some respects well discussed this subject—"will be glad to find a clue by which to extricate himself from this labyrinth of fables and absurdities, and be conducted to something like the safe and authorized path of history. Such a clue is, I think, afforded by a hint of Bishop Stillingfleet's. That author suggests, that Lucius may possibly have ruled over those territories which were once possessed by the Romanized Cogidunus, from whom he might probably have been descended. Of all the opinions that have been offered on the subject, this surely is the most reasonable. It appears extremely probable, that, during the reigns of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus and Commodus, a native Briton, named Lucius, reigned, by the permission of the Romans, over the country of the Regni, now known as Surrey and Sussex; and also over that of the Dobuni, which comprised the modern counties of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire; that hearing much of the Christian religion, as observed in many parts of Britain, and particularly brought to his notice by the accounts of

[1] Thackeray, vol. i. p. 142.

the sufferings of the Christians of Vienne, and Lyons, and of some remarkable conversions at Rome, Lucius was anxious to obtain for himself and his people, the advantage of being fully instructed in this religion: that, for this purpose, he dispatched two British Christians, Medwy and Elvan, or Elfan, to Eleutherius, Bishop of Rome; not because he regarded that Bishop as the supreme head of the Christian community, but simply because he himself, being tributary to the Romans, naturally looked up to Rome as the centre of information upon every question of importance; that Eleutherius, in compliance with the request of Lucius, sent back, with Elvan and Medwy, two ecclesiastics, to whom tradition has assigned the names of Faganus and Duvianus; who, coming into Britain, baptized king Lucius and many of his subjects, and thus enlarged and more fully confirmed that Christian faith, which had been introduced into different parts of the island for upwards of 100 years." But all which took place at this time falls far short of an universal establishment of the Christian religion in Britain. King Lucius and the principal part of the inhabitants of the south, may have conformed to Christian practices in token of their recognition of the Christian faith, but more than a century after this date we find paganism still in existence, over a very large portion of our island.

CHAP. XIV.

THE REIGNS OF PERTINAX, DIDIUS JULIANUS, AND SEVERUS—ALBINUS, GOVERNOR OF BRITAIN—CONTEST BETWEEN SEVERUS ALBINUS AND NIGER—BATTLE OF LYONS—VIRIUS LUPUS, GOVERNOR OF BRITAIN—SEVERUS ARRIVES IN BRITAIN IN 208—HIS INVASION OF CALEDONIA IN 209—BUILDS THE WALL ACROSS THE ISLAND IN 210—DIES AT YORK IN 211.

THE year 193 witnessed the successive rise and fall of three Roman emperors. The assassination of Commodus was followed by the elevation of Pertinax to the throne, which in three months was again vacant by his murder. The Prætorian soldiers, like the Janissaries of modern Turkey, had reached the highest pitch of insolence. They struck off the head of Pertinax in a moment of effervescence, and set the empire to sale by public auction. The highest bidder was Didius Julianus, a helpless and unworthy merchant, whose only merit was his wealth. But the reproach of this purchase stung to the heart of many a blunt Roman soldier. Three principal competitors arose, Severus, who commanded the Pannonian legions; Pescennius Niger in Syria; and Clodius Albinus in Britain*: the first of these proclaimed his resolution to vindicate the offended majesty of Rome, and to avenge the death of Pertinax on the abandoned Prætorians, and the helpless individual whom they had raised to the throne.

* Xiphil. lxxiii. 14, 15.

But Severus was too ambitious a man to have no other views than to vindicate the dignity of Rome: he was also too prudent and sharp-sighted to overlook the probable turn which things would take. It was evident, that, as soon as Didius Julianus should be got rid of, a contest for empire must arise between himself and his two competitors, Albinus and Niger. The former of these was a great favourite with those whom he governed, and was a man of talents and honour. The province, moreover, which he governed, was not more than a journey of three or four weeks from Rome; and if Severus should pass into the distant east to contend with Niger in the plains of Asia, he might find on his return to Italy[b] that Albinus had secured the capital for himself. On the other hand, the governor of Syria was no despicable rival: he was as much beloved by the soldiers of the East, as Albinus by those of Britain: his virtues were calculated to shine equally in civil as in military affairs, and his ability to command developed itself without that haughtiness and rigid affectation of authority, which have made so many generals objects of abhorrence to their men. Severus, the rival of Albinus and Niger, was their contrast in almost every particular: he was equal to them in the command of an army, but ruthlessly severe in maintaining his authority; and whilst his rivals, from the humanity of their characters, might be deterred from an advantage by the ill which ensued to others, Severus never hesitated at the most atrocious acts of cruelty, treachery, or oppression, which would put him in possession of the object which he was pursuing. Immediately on his hearing of the events which had passed at Rome, he marched with extraordinary ra-

[b] Herodian ii. 48, 49.

pidity to the capital, where the ignoble Julian and the licentious Prætorians awaited his arrival; the one conscious of his inability to command, the other enervated by licentiousness, and utterly unable to cope with the army of the north. The usurper was dragged from his palace, and speedily assassinated: the Prætorians were degraded from their privileges, and Severus without delay was raised with acclamations to the throne.

In the mean time, however, being a prudent and discreet man, he was suspicious of the course which the troops in Britain might take, as they were very numerous, and composed of the choicest of the Roman soldiers. Of Albinus, their leader, on account of his high ancestry, and the opulence and splendor of his family, Severus justly entertained alarm. He determined therefore to conciliate him, by artifice, to his own interests, lest, having such high pretensions to imperial power, and trusting to his wealth and noble descent, supported moreover by so strong an army, and connected by intimacy with all the best families in Rome, he might suddenly prove a formidable rival claimant for the empire. To effect the object which he had in view, Severus addressed a letter to Albinus, conferring upon him the title of Cæsar, and inviting him to become his associate in the government of the empire: he further entreated him to give his whole and undivided attention to the cares of his province; observing, that the state had need of the services of so noble a personage still in the vigour of life, whereas himself was old, and suffering under a rheumatic affection, which often disabled him from active service: his children moreover were young, and could give no assistance to their father in the arduous concerns of

government. These representations produced the desired effect upon Albinus[c]: he trusted implicitly in Severus, who in his letters made the most solemn protestations of his sincerity and good faith.

These, however, were not the only artifices which Severus used to allure Albinus to tranquillity: he referred the whole matter to the senate, and invited them to confirm the honours which had been bestowed on the governor of Britain: he next ordered money to be coined bearing his image, and ratified all this by the erection of statues in his name. These testimonies of amity were readily accepted: Albinus, glad to receive without contest, and with no risk, the object of his ambition, remained in his insular province, and left Severus and Niger to decide the struggle for empire which awaited them[d].

This struggle, however, was speedily decided, though Severus found it a difficult and protracted task to reduce to obedience the wide provinces which had taken part against him. Niger was defeated in a great battle near Issus, and was slain in his flight from the field of action: but the nations and cities of the east offered a determined resistance, and Byzantium, an important city, though not yet raised to be the capital of the east,

[c] Herodian [Hist. ii. 49.] describes Albinus as a man naturally vain-glorious and vain: but his conduct in the present instance is not incompatible with honesty, moderation, and good feeling.

Aurelius Victor [De Cæs. 20.] says, that Albinus was the author of the death of Pertinax, and that, in alarm for the consequences of that deed, he set out to cross over into Britain, and when he was in Gaul, assumed the imperial purple. Orosius confirms this statement, adding, that Albinus was the associate of Didius Julianus in slaying Pertinax.

[d] Xiphilin. lxxiii. 15. Herod. iii. 49.

held out three years before it submitted to the arms of the conqueror. At length, all opposition having ceased, Severus returned to Rome in the year 196, not however to enjoy tranquillity, for before the end of that year, either by his jealousy of a rival, or by the imprudence of Albinus, war became inevitable between them. The power of the governor of Britain had always been an object of suspicion, and now that the third competitor was removed, Severus looked upon Albinus as an obnoxious and formidable rival. "Moreover," says Herodian[e], "he heard that Albinus was exulting too imperially in the title of Cæsar, and that many, more especially of the principal senators, were severally and secretly sending letters, urging him to come to Rome, while Severus was absent and occupied." With this, in part, agrees the account of Dion Cassius, or his abbreviator Xiphilinus, but it assigns to Severus the first departure from justice, and the first provocation to hostility. "He no longer paid to Albinus the honours which were due to him as Cæsar, for he had now got rid of Niger, and put matters every where into as favourable a position as he wished: but Albinus was ambitious of possessing the empire, and thus from these causes the world was again thrown into confusion[f]." That the conduct of Severus evinced deceit and treachery of the deepest dye, and that Albinus was forced, whether against his will or not, to the decision of their quarrel by the sword, appears too plainly from the sequel. "Severus endeavoured to avoid an open rupture with his associate, and feared to enter rashly into a contest, for which he could find no plea; but he chose rather, if it were possible, to remove his enemy secretly and by

[e] Hist. iii. 16. [f] Dion. Cass. lxxv. 4.

treachery. For this purpose, he ordered the attendance of some of the confidential ministers who were accustomed to convey the mandates of the emperor. To them he entrusted letters for Albinus with a secret message, and he ordered them, as soon as they should be introduced, to deliver the letters, and to request a private audience, that they might communicate to him the secret commands of Severus. If this should be granted, they were to fall on Albinus, when he was separated from his guards, and slay him with their daggers. Still further, to ensure his purpose, he furnished the emissaries with poisonous drugs, which they were to persuade the cooks of Albinus to mix with his food, or those who waited at table to administer in the wine which they handed to their master. But Albinus was surrounded by faithful friends, who suspected that his life was aimed at, and advised him to take precautions against the deceitful emperor. They urged that caution could not be unnecessary against a man who had practised such baseness towards the officers of Niger: for he had persuaded them, by holding their children as hostages, to desert the cause of Niger, and when he had established every thing as he wished, he put to death both the officers and their children. Such deeds as this shewed the native character of the man; and Albinus, following the advice which was given, increased the number of his guards, and suffered no messenger from Severus to enter his presence until he had laid aside his military sword, and it was ascertained by examination that he bore no other weapon concealed about his person.

When therefore the emissaries of Severus approached, they delivered their letter, and requested

a private audience, that they might deliver to Albinus alone the secret instructions of Severus. This request excited suspicion; the messengers were arrested, and, being interrogated in private, revealed to Albinus all the plot against his life. He ordered the treacherous men to receive the punishment which was their due, and immediately declared war against Severus as an open enemy.

When intelligence of these proceedings was brought to Rome, Severus, who acted by fits of passion, to which he was always liable by nature, no longer concealed his enmity, but made preparations to meet Albinus in the field[g]." When these were complete, he set out towards Gaul, and in the course of his journey evinced that indomitable resolution of character, which in all his undertakings more than half contributed to his success. Nothing stopped his march for an instant: the fêtes and festivals of the districts and cities through which he passed were unheeded: neither fatigue, nor the extremities of cold or heat, arrested the progress of his troops; and their commander was constantly seen on the highest summits of the mountains over which his army passed, with his bare head exposed to the snow and sleet of winter, and urging on his army by the influence of his own example.

Whilst Severus was thus bringing up his army by rapid marches towards collision with the enemy, he neglected no measures which might be wanting to secure his success. "A formidable body of troops was sent to occupy the narrow passes of the Alps, and to guard the approaches to Italy. When Albinus, who was now grown indolent and luxurious, was informed

[g] Herod. iii. 6.

that Severus made no delay, but was already advancing, it threw him into great consternation. Crossing over, therefore, from Britain to the opposite coast of Gaul, he there pitched his camp. He then sent to all the surrounding districts, and commanded their rulers to supply the army with money and provisions. Some obeyed his commands, and furnished them to their own destruction, for they were afterwards punished by Severus for this act; but such as disregarded them, determining luckily rather than advisedly, escaped: for the issue and fortune of the war decided on the judgment of each in this respect.

When, therefore, the army of Severus had arrived in Gaul, there was some skirmishing in different places; but the decisive battle was near Lyons, a great and opulent city, in which, having shut himself up, Albinus remained, but sent forth his forces to the fight. A severe conflict ensuing, the fate of victory on either side for a long time continued dubious; for the Britons yielded nothing either in courage or sanguinary spirit to the Illyrians. Such noble armies, therefore, encountering, the overthrow of neither was easy: and according to some of the historians of that time, who write for truth's sake and not for favour, that division of Albinus's army to which Severus with his army was opposed, had greatly the advantage; insomuch that he was put to flight, fell from his horse, and threw off his imperial robe to conceal himself.

The Britons now pursuing, and shouting as though already victorious, they say that Lætus, one of Severus's commanders, came in sight with the army he commanded fresh and untouched, from not having yet been in action.

A charge has been brought against Lætus, that he

watched the event of the battle, and came up slowly with his men that he might bring them fresh into the field; and that when at last he shewed himself, after the report of the death of Severus, it was that he might himself be made emperor. This charge against Lætus received confirmation from the sequel. For at a later period, when Severus had succeeded in every thing, and had no longer any enemy to alarm him, he bestowed great rewards on all his other generals, but put Lætus to death, in punishment, as is most likely, for his former treachery. All this, however, happened afterwards. But at this time, as was said before, Lætus coming in sight with fresh forces, Severus's party took courage, placed him on his horse, and again clad him in his imperial robe. Albinus's troops supposing themselves already victorious, and, in consequence, having their ranks somewhat disordered, when this fresh army fell suddenly upon them, gave way after little resistance. A desperate rout ensuing, the soldiers of Severus pursued and slew them until they threw themselves into the city. The number of the slain and captive on either side is differently recorded, as the inclination of the several historians of those times dictated [b]."

[b] This account of the battle of Lyons is from Herodian. Xiphilinus, copying from Dion, gives us a more detailed and rather different description. That the reader may be able to compare both, and harmonize them in the best way he can for himself, I here subjoin the narrative of Xiphilinus:

"The contest between Severus and Albinus was decided at Lyons in the following manner. Each commander led a hundred and fifty thousand men into the field.....and the battle presented many vicissitudes and changes of fortune. The left wing of the army of Albinus was defeated, and fled to their entrenchments: the soldiers of Severus pursued so hotly, that they entered the camp with them,

The army of Severus, thus victorious, plundered and burnt the city of Lyons, and having cut off the

and began to plunder their tents. In the mean time, the soldiers of Albinus's right wing, who had dug in front of them deep pitfalls, which they had lightly covered and concealed from the view of the enemy, advanced as near as they could to the soldiers of Severus, and there halting, harassed them much by their arrows. They did not however advance further, and at last retreated with the view to entice the enemy to pursue. The stratagem succeeded: the soldiers of Severus, indignant at the annoyance from troops so near to them, and in contempt at their sudden retreat, charged against them without being aware of the insecurity of the ground. The consequence was, that they fell into the pitfalls, and suffered a dreadful loss; for the second lines fell upon the first, and the third upon the second, those behind urging on those before, until they all became involved in a general calamity. Those in the rear, seeing what had happened to those who were in front, retreated in terror, and all together were wedged into a deep ravine. A terrible slaughter was made of those who had fallen into the pits; and those who remained on the field, between the ravine and the pits, were shot down in numbers by the enemy's missiles. Severus, seeing this, marched with his guards to assist his men; but was so far from assisting them, that he very nearly involved his guards in the same misfortune, and was himself unhorsed and in most imminent danger. Seeing all his men taking to flight, he tore his robe, and, drawing his sword, rushed into the thickest of his men, that he might induce them by shame to rally, or at least perish with them. Some of his men, seeing the bravery of their general, halted, and returned to the engagement. At this moment their pursuers received a sudden check from a new army that just entered the field; several of Severus's men were cut down in mistake for soldiers of Albinus, and the troops of the latter were at once driven from the field. At the same time they were assailed on the flanks by the cavalry of Lætus, who had just come up, and a total rout ensued. For Lætus temporized, as long as the battle raged equally for both sides, waiting for the rival generals to be killed, that his own troops, who were fresh, might secure the fruits of the victory for himself. When, however, he saw that the troops of Severus began to prevail, he at once took part in the action. Thus Severus gained the victory." Dion. lxxv. 21.

head of Albinus carried it as a present to their general, who sent it to Rome to be exposed on a stake to the public view. This battle, which conferred on Severus the undisputed possession of the empire, was fought on the 19th of February, A. D. 197, four years after the league of amity which was made between the rival leaders. When the hostile army was annihilated, with no hopes of being again assembled, Severus turned his attention to the settlement of those countries which had been under the government of Albinus. In Gaul he sought out all those who had acted against him in the late contest, and without remorse or hesitation put them to the sword. He next endeavoured to rearrange the Roman province in Britain, which, left to itself by the departure of Albinus, was not unlikely to become a scene of war and confusion. It was probably at this time that he appointed Virius Lupus[1] to the command in Britain; at all events it is certain that this general commanded the Roman troops in the island between the victory of Lyons and the year 208, when the presence of Severus himself was necessary to check the progress of the barbarians. When these subjects had received from Severus the attention which their importance merited, the successful emperor returned to Rome at the head of an immense army, gathered from different nations, to display his triumph to the citizens, and, as we might suppose, to enjoy the despotic power which was its fruit. But, before the expiration of the year, we find Severus in the east,

[1] According to Dion, [lxxv. 6.] Lupus was at the head of a separate body of troops in the interest of Severus, and had suffered a severe defeat from Albinus before the battle of Lyons.

where he continued till the year 202; for his energy of character would not let him remain idle, and his love of war found material for action in the warlike and roving tribes which lay beyond the plains of Armenia, and never were subject to the Roman arms.

Meanwhile Virius Lupus, governor of Britain, met with difficulties from the northern tribes, which shew, that those invincible barbarians had gained upon their Roman invaders since they were repressed in the reign of Antoninus.

It is interesting to mark the permanence of the features which nature has impressed on the Highland inhabitants of Scotland, and the description which Dion Cassius has left us of these tribes in the reign of Severus, almost carries us back to the times of Agricola, when the same appearance was presented to the invaders, the same bravery in defending their country, and the same tenacity of personal liberty, even when their native land was overrun and occupied by the legions of the enemy.

"The two greatest tribes," says Dion, "among the Britons are the Caledonians and the Mæatæ, for even the names of all the other tribes have in a manner merged in these two. The Mæatæ dwell close to the wall which divides the island into two parts, and the Caledonians live beyond them. Each of these people inhabit wild mountains, where there is no water, and desert plains and marshes, where they live without walls or cities; neither do they practise husbandry, but live by pasturage, or the chase, and berries which grow in the woods; for they never taste fish, although their lakes and rivers furnish an almost inexhaustible supply. They live in tents, naked and barefooted, having their wives

in common, and they rear all the children which are born to them[k]. The government of these tribes is democratical, and they delight above all things in pillage: they fight from chariots, which are drawn by small swift horses; they fight also on foot, run with great speed, and are most resolute when compelled to stand: their arms consist of a shield and a short spear, which has a brazen knob at the extremity of the shaft, that when shaken it may terrify the enemy by its noise. They use daggers also, and are capable of enduring hunger, thirst, and hardships of every description; for they will plunge into the marshes, and remain there several days, with only their heads above the water. When they are in the woods, they subsist on bark and roots: they prepare for all emergencies a certain kind of food, of which if they eat only so much as the size of a bean, they neither hunger nor thirst. Such is the island of Britain, and such the inhabitants of that part of it, which is hostile to us; for it is an island, and so, as I have said[l], at that time it was clearly ascertained to be: its length is seven thousand one hundred and thirty-two furlongs: its greatest breadth two thousand three hundred and ten, its least breadth is three hundred. Of this island very little more than one half is ours[m]."

These were the tribes which, taking advantage of the convulsions in the Roman state, invaded the pro-

[k] This was not the case with some of the nations of antiquity, among whom infanticide was allowed within certain limits. It is said, that the Chinese still occasionally practise the same expedient to check the increase of population.

[l] "At length, first in the time of the proconsul Agrippa, and now under the emperor Severus, it has been clearly proved to be an island." Dion. Cass. xxxix. 50.

[m] Xiphilin. lxxvi. 12—16.

vince, and seemed in a fair way to expel their hated invaders from the whole island. It is stated by Richard of Cirencester[n], that about this time the Picts, a tribe which will hereafter occur repeatedly to notice, first landed in Scotland, under their king Reuda. This writer, living in the fourteenth century, professes to have derived his information from an ancient Roman writing, which since Richard's time has probably perished. It is therefore impossible to ascertain how far credit may be placed in the accounts of a writer who lived so long after the events which he relates, but the fact of the extraordinary successes which the Caledonians gained at this time, seems to confirm the supposition, that they received considerable reinforcements from abroad. The same writer tells us, that the wall built to protect the province was completely destroyed, and that the whole district, called Vespasiana, lying between the wall of Hadrian and that of Antoninus, was wrested from the Roman possession.

To repel these invaders, the troops of Virius Lupus were not sufficiently numerous, or the military genius of their general was unequal to the emergency. He appears indeed to have possessed more ability to adorn the province with works of art in peace than to defend it in war. "The following inscription, which our antiquarians have preserved, relates to the restoration of the town Olicana, now Ilkley, in Yorkshire:

IM. SEVERVS
AVG. ET ANTONINVS
CAES. DESTINATVS
RESTITVERVNT. CVRAN-
TE VIRIO LVPO LEG. E-
ORVM. PR. PR[o].

[n] See Historical Documents concerning the Ancient Britons, p. 415.
[o] Gough's Camden's Britannia, vol. iii. p. 7.

The emperor Severus
Augustus and Antoninus [i. e. Caracalla]
Cæsar elect
Restored [this town] *by the agency*
of Virius Lupus their lieu-
tenant and proprætor.

"Another inscription has been found in Richmondshire, relative to a Bath-house, restored by the same Virius Lupus, for the use of the first Thracian cohort, then quartered at Levatræ:

DEAE FORTVNAE
VIRIVS LVPVS
LEG. AVG. PR. PR.
BALINEVM VI
IGNIS EXVST
VM. COH. I. THR-
ACVM REST-
ITVIT. CVRANTE
VAL. FRON-
TONE PRAEF....
EQ. ALAE VETTO[P].

To the Goddess Fortune
Virius Lupus
lieutenant of Augustus and proprætor
this bath by
force of fire consu-
med for the first cohort of the Thra-
cians restor-
ed, by the agency of
Val. Fron-
to præfect
of the troop of cavalry...

[p] Quoted by Thackeray, vol. i. p. 170. See Gough's Camden, vol. iii. p. 25.

But architecture did not alone engross the attention of Virius Lupus. His name occurs in the Fragments of Ulpian, quoted in the Digest[q], where he is represented as receiving from Severus a rescript concerning wills made in favour of a son, and the laws of inheritance.

These occupations, creditable to the governor in time of peace, were little calculated to repel the fierce nations of Caledonia. It appears, by an expression of the historian Xiphilinus[r], that the tribe of the Mæatæ had entered into certain engagements with the Roman governor, but that they were encouraged to break their compact by the promise of assistance from the Caledonians. This alliance alarmed Virius Lupus, and, as Severus was engaged in a war nearer home, it was not likely that he could send any succours to Britain.

In this strait, Virus Lupus was constrained to buy off with gold the enemy whom he could not repel by arms. A large sum of money was devoted to this purpose, and the barbarians retreated, not, however, to remain at peace, but to sally forth again at the end of two years with their appetites for plunder whetted, furnishing to their enemies, the Romans, their first lesson of caution against the principle of buying with money what must always in such emergencies be secured by the sword—the liberty and independence of one's country.

But now, the governor of Britain, unable to meet the attacks of the enemy which were made with greater fury than before, sent hasty letters to the emperor urging him to send a considerable reinforcement of soldiers, and if possible, to come himself to repel the barbarians.

This invitation reached the emperor at a time when he would have been glad of any excuse to leave the

[q] Dig. xxviii. 6, 2. [r] Hist. lxxv. §. 5.

capital: his sons, Caracalla and Geta, had adopted a most dissolute way of life, and mingled, without restraint, in all the licentiousness of the games and public spectacles. It was the wish of Severus to remove them from this vortex of corruption, and when the letters of Virius Lupus arrived, with the intelligence that the whole province was overrun by the barbarians, who carried off all they could get, and destroyed by fire what could not be removed, the emperor, now more than sixty years old, started at the summons, like an old war-horse at the sound of the trumpet; for he was by nature fond of military glory, and after his victories in Gaul and the east, eagerly embraced an opportunity of earning fresh laurels in the distant isle of Britain. His advanced age did not deter him, nor was he kept back by a painful disease which affected his limbs, and often deprived him of the power of walking, for his mind was as young and active as ever, and willing to draw away his sons from their bad habits which they had imbibed at Rome, and to give them a little experience of military campaigns, he set out at once at the head of his army for Britain. In this long journey, he displayed all his usual activity, and never stopped long in the same place, though the disease in his joints, which habitually afflicted him, was now so severe, that he was obliged to be carried in a litter. The rapidity of his march was so great, that he crossed the sea into Britain, in the latter part of the year 208, more quickly than can be described, or than could be expected; immediately on his arrival, he drew together the Roman armies from all sides, and, having concentrated a vast force, marched at once to meet the enemy.

The Britons, alarmed at the emperor's unexpected

presence, and hearing that a large army was coming against them, sent ambassadors with terms of peace, and offered to give satisfaction for their previous offences. But Severus, unwilling to return so soon to Rome, and give up his intention of obtaining a victory and title over the Britons, detained their ambassadors some time, and then dismissing them without an answer, made preparations for prosecuting the war.

In the beginning of the next year, [A.D. 209,] he led his army into Caledonia, resolved never to halt until he should have reached its northern extremity, and reduced the whole island to submission. That the southern districts might not be disturbed during his absence, he left his younger son, Geta, to manage the affairs of the government, and appointed the oldest and most experienced of his friends to form a council, and assist the young prince with their advice. The elder son Bassianus, also called Antoninus, and more commonly Caracalla, accompanied his father in the expedition against the Caledonians. When they had passed the fosses and mounds which protected the Roman province, they had almost daily skirmishes with the enemy, in all of which the Romans had the advantage, but they failed to bring them to a general engagement, nor did the Caledonians ever shew themselves, except in small bodies; and they soon made it evident, that they had no intention to risk their cause in a single battle against an enemy so manifestly superior to them. They little heeded the minor defeats which their skirmishers daily experienced; for it was easy to make good their retreat through the woods and marshes, from the knowledge of the country, which gave them infinite advantages over those who attempted to pursue them. The climate also caused

much discomfort to the Romans, most of whom had never before been in so northerly a latitude. "The greatest part of Britain," says Herodian, "is exposed to inundations of the ocean, and becomes a marsh. The thick vapour, which these swamps exhale, cause the air of that country to be thick and foggy.....The barbarians, by habit, swim across the marshes without difficulty, or wade through them, wetting themselves up to their loins: for they are almost totally naked, and take no care for the mud. They are unacquainted with the use of clothes, and adorn their necks and flanks with iron rings, to which, as an ornament, they attach as much value as other nations do to gold. They puncture their bodies with figures of all kinds of animals; which is one reason why they have not adopted the use of clothing, that the figures may not be concealed. They are a warlike and courageous race of men, and are armed with a small shield and spear, and a sword suspended from their naked bodies. They are unacquainted with the use of a breast-plate, or helmet, which they think would be an incumbrance in passing the marshes."

To meet the peculiar circumstances of a war against this extraordinary people, Severus made every preparation that was likely to benefit the Romans and embarrass the enemy. Above all things, he endeavoured to throw bridges over the marshy places, that his men, treading in safety, might more easily cross them, and fight with greater security, when they had a solid footing. He also cut down some of the thickest of the forests, made roads through the mountains, and filled up the marshes. In all these labours the army suffered incredible hardships, and frequently fell into ambuscades of the natives, who left sheep and

oxen in the way of the soldiers, and cut off large numbers of them, whilst they were occupied in securing the booty. The rain also distressed them much; and whenever any of them lost their way and were separated from the rest, they were sure to be butchered by the natives. In this case, many of the Romans, who were unable to proceed, were put to death by their companions, that they might not fall into the hands of the barbarians. It is recorded by the contemporary writers, that fifty thousand men perished in this campaign; a large number in proportion to the extent of the country which they had invaded, and probably much greater than the losses of the Caledonians themselves, who, having nothing to fear but the Roman swords, now felt the benefit of the plan which they had adopted, not to meet their enemy in a regular battle.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, Severus continued to advance, until he reached the northern coasts of Britain. Here he noticed the parallax of the sun, the comparative length of the days and nights in summer and winter, and ascertained by ocular expeperience, what seems still to have been a doubtful point with some, that Britain was an island. It will not diminish our admiration of this wonderful man to hear, that during a great part of this expedition he was carried in a covered litter, in consequence of the disease in his limbs which so often afflicted him. Arrived on the furthest bounds of the island, he no longer disdained to open a treaty with the natives; for the progress which he had made was perhaps thought sufficient to vindicate the pretensions with which he had set out, whilst the losses which his army had suffered might teach even a general superior to Severus,

if such could be found, that discretion is the better part of valour. It is likely that the Caledonians were in no wise reluctant to be released from a war which had penetrated into the vitals of their country. But a domestic cause of affliction was continually preying on the happiness of Severus. His sons Caracalla and Geta were not only at variance with one another, but vied with each other in treating their father with disrespect. The old man, a victim to disease, which rendered his body a very unworthy receptacle for his fierce and energetic spirit, was frequently unable to move from his bed, or to discharge any of the duties of a commander.

Impatient of the delay which this occasioned to the war, he tried to induce Caracalla to go and take the command of the troops. But Caracalla cared very little about the barbarians, and endeavoured only to gain the affections of the army, that when his father was dead he might reign alone, to the exclusion of his brother Geta, whose influence he tried, by all the means in his power, to weaken. His father's lingering so long gave him displeasure, and he did not hesitate to tamper with the physicians and servants, and urge them to use foul play in their attendance on the old man, so as to get rid of him sooner. But the servants of the emperor were too faithful to attempt the life of their master, or dreaded to be concerned in so horrible a parricide, and Caracalla was driven to adopt more open means to rid himself of his troublesome parent. Severus had caused the soles of his feet to be punctured, and thereby obtained so much relief from his complaint, that he was able to ride on horseback. The father and son had left the camp to receive a surrender of arms from the Caledonians, and to confer

with them on the terms of a treaty. Caracalla was behind his father, and the army was in the rear: in front of them were the troops of the enemy. At this moment Caracalla determined to kill his father with his own hand, and checking his horse, drew his sword, that he might stab him in the back. But the soldiers, who were behind, seeing the movement, shouted out to Severus to beware, and Caracalla, startled at their cry, desisted from his purpose. The emperor also looked round, and saw the sword drawn, but without making any remark on the subject, proceeded to discharge the business which he had in hand. When this was completed, he retired to his tent, and summoning his son with Papinian the celebrated lawyer and Castor, he commanded that a sword should be brought, and said these words to Caracalla: "If you wish to kill me, do it here, not in the sight of the soldiers and the enemy. I am old and feeble; you are young and strong. But if you shudder at doing such a deed with your own hand, here stands Papinian, who will do all you command him, as if you were the emperor." The historian does not tell us what effect this produced upon Caracalla. The subject was dropped and never revived, but the anecdote confirms the character of the emperor, as given by Dion, that his affection for his children far exceeded and outweighed his regard for the public good.

This unpleasant state of things in his own family no doubt helped to make Severus wish for peace with the Caledonians, that he might give up to repose the short time which seemed to remain to him. A treaty was concluded between the parties, on condition that Severus should retire with his army, and the Caledonians should give up a considerable district of their

territory to the Romans. In consequence of this treaty, Severus withdrew his troops into the Roman province, apparently in the winter of the same year [A.D. 209.] in which he had commenced the war.

The care of defending the province against the Caledonians was not, however, the only occupation which engaged the attention of Severus during his stay in Britain. Many inscriptions still remain, commemorative of his zeal in adorning the island with public buildings. The northern part of England was naturally his general place of residence, because it was nearer to the seat of war. York derived a great accession of dignity and importance from the preference shewn to it by this monarch, and became from this time the principal city of the north. But a more important work was already planned by Severus, and was executed within twelve months after it was first designed. The frontier of the Roman province had fluctuated from time to time, according to the ability of the government to defend it, between the walls of Hadrian and Antoninus. Every attempt, that had as yet been made to effect an entire and final conquest of the barbarians to the north, had failed, even at the moment when victory seemed complete. In a few years the enemy were again in force, and not unfrequently regained more than they had lost. The attempt to confine beyond a line of fortifications those whom it was found impossible to subdue, had not yet been fairly tried; for the walls of Hadrian and Antoninus, constructed of banks of earth, were of a perishable nature, and formed a weak barrier to resist the inroads of the enemy. The late expedition of Severus had taught him how formidable were the tribes who dwelt beyond the Roman pale, and as he had no hope that his life would be protracted

long enough for a second campaign, he provided for the security of his sons, who were to succeed him in the empire, by erecting a stupendous barrier of castles and forts, connected by a continuous wall of masonry, from one side of the island to the other. This wall, running nearly in the same line as that of Hadrian, extended from Segedunum, now called Cousin's House, near the mouth of the river Tyne, to Tunocelum or Bowness on the Solway Frith, a distance of sixty-eight English miles; "its height was twelve feet besides the parapet, and its breadth eight feet[a].

"Three different kinds of fortresses, which may be called stations, castles, and turrets, were erected along its line. Of these, the stations, although not all of the same figure or dimensions, were by far the most considerable in point of size and strength. They were designed for the head-quarters of the cohorts of troops which were placed there in garrison, and whence

[a] Our knowledge of the situations of the different walls built by the Romans in this island is very imperfect. The account of the wall of Severus given above is taken from Thackeray, vol. i. 172. See Gordon's Itin. Septentrion. p. 83. Horsley's Brit. Romana, b. i. c. 8. pp. 121, 122. Bedæ Hist. Ecc. lib. i. Henry's Hist. of Britain, b. i. App. No. ix. and Whitaker's Hist. of Manchester, b. i. c. 12. It is worthy of notice, that there is great discrepancy in the text of the original writers about the length of the wall of Severus. Spartianus [Sev. 18.] gives no measurement: Eusebius [Chron. int. Hieron. lib. ii.] has 132 miles: Aurel. Victor, [Epit. 40.] and Eutropius, [viii. 19.] give the length at 32 miles only: Orosius, [vii. 17.] Cassiodorus, [Chronic.] Bede, [Chronic.] and Nennius, [Hist. Brit. c. 19.] 132 miles. In this discrepancy of the original writers, it is curious that the moderns have adopted a measurement different from all the foregoing. We learn from Richard of Cirencester, that the wall of Severus was built on the same line as that of Hadrian. It is difficult to reconcile this with the interpolated passage of Nennius. [See Historical Documents, pp. 319 and 419.]

detachments were sent to the adjoining castles and turrets. The stations were fortified on every side with deep ditches and strong walls; the main wall forming part of each building towards the north. Within the stations were accommodations for the officers and soldiers; the smallest of such stations being capable of containing 600 men, the complement of a cohort. Adjoining to each station was a town consisting of Roman and British labourers and artificers, partly slaves and partly freemen, who, with their families, were glad to avail themselves of such military protection. The number of stations along the whole line of wall was eighteen. They were not, however, placed at equal distances from each other, the interval between them being regulated by the nature and exigencies of the spot. Thus, towards the centre of the wall, where attacks from the Mæatæ and Caledonians were most to be apprehended, the stations were nearest to each other. Wherever such advantages could be obtained, the declivity of a hill, a south aspect, and the vicinity of a river, determined the situation.

"The castles were eighty-one in number. These were greatly inferior, in point of size and strength, to the stations, in the intervals between which they were placed. They were squares of sixty-six feet, and were guarded by a competent number of soldiers detached from the main cohort.

"The turrets were a great deal smaller than the castles, each forming a square of twelve feet, and standing out of the southern side of the main wall. They were placed between the castles, their whole number amounting to upwards of 300. The turrets were guarded by sentinels; who, upon the approach

of danger, were thus able to spread an alarm from one extremity of the wall to the other.

"The ditches, roads[t], and other military accommodations accompanying the wall were worthy of the Romans; whose soldiers, unlike those of modern times, rendered themselves as useful in peace as they were formidable in battle. The usual force allotted to the defence of this stupendous line of fortification amounted to ten thousand men."

Such was the formidable barrier[u] which was begun and completed by Severus in the year 210; but the barbarians, whom it was intended to confine beyond this massive frontier, were already in arms before the wall was finished. The news of their revolt inflamed the emperor's fury, and he summoned his army with the intention of again invading their territories. A war of extermination was determined on, and this sanguinary resolution was expressed in a passage of the poet Homer,

> Let none, said he, escape destruction dire,
> Nor of your hands elude the vengeful ire;
> Let not the babe within his mother's womb,
> Babe though he be, avoid the mournful doom.

The Caledonians and the Mæatæ had again united their arms, and Severus expressed his intention of

[t] The great defect in the Roman roads was, that they almost always crossed the rivers of the island, not by bridges, but by shallows or fords.

[u] Spartianus tells us, that as Severus returned from an inspection of the wall, and was entering the nearest building, an Æthiopian approached him with a crown of cypress, and said to him, "You have been every thing, and have conquered every thing, now then be a God." See Spart. in v. Sev. 22.

leading his troops to chastise them. But he was again attacked by the disease in his feet, which disabled him from walking or riding, and the troops, murmuring at his absence, saluted Caracalla with the title of Augustus. This roused the energies of the old emperor: he caused himself to be placed on the tribunal, and commanded that the new emperor Caracalla, and all who had joined in that act of insubordination, whether tribunes, centurions, or private soldiers, should appear before him. "Soldiers!" said he, "it is not the feet, but the head which discharges the office of a general!" All were awed by the vigour of mind which the old man still displayed[x], and orders were given to march against the enemy. But the constitution of Severus was now worn out, and it became evident that his end was approaching. The undutiful conduct of his son produced vexation of mind, which cooperated with the ravages of his disease. He died at York on the fourth of February, A.D. 211, after a reign of eighteen years, distinguished by more glorious triumphs, both over foreign enemies and domestic rivals, than any of his predecessors. By his will, the two Cæsars, Caracalla and Geta, were to share the imperial power between them, and by their father's death they came into possession of enormous wealth, such as no emperor had ever possessed before, and a noble army which no power in the known world could resist[y].

[x] Aurel. Victor. de Cæs. 20.

[y] The authorities for the reign of Severus are Herodian. ii. 48, 49. iii. 16, 18, 20—24, 46—51. Dion. Cassius, xxix. 50. Spartianus in V. Severi, Euseb. Chron. Aur. Victor. de Cæs. 20. and Epit. 40, Eutrop. viii. 19. Oros vii. 17. Cassiod. Chron. Cod. Just. iii. 32. Dig. xxxvi. 1. 46. Xiphilin. excerp. Dion. lxxv. 5. lxxvi. 10—16.

CHAP. XV.

REIGNS OF CARACALLA AND GETA—OSSIAN'S POEMS, FINGAL, &c.—MACRINUS—ELAGABALUS—ALEXANDER SEVERUS, &c.—CARINUS—DIOCLETIAN AND MAXIMIAN—CARAUSIUS REVOLTS IN BRITAIN—IS MURDERED BY ALLECTUS—ALLECTUS IS SLAIN, AND BRITAIN RESTORED TO THE EMPIRE BY CONSTANTIUS.

In all countries, poetry is the first species of composition, the first means of handing down instruction or amusement to posterity. To account for this is a work of little difficulty. Among a people rude and ignorant of the liberal arts, any method of recording the warlike acts of their progenitors or their own, would be acceptable in proportion to its efficiency. Now, when the object to be attained was to preserve the events of ages, no memory would be found capable of storing up such a number and vicissitude of facts, as must occur in a considerable period of time, without first inventing some form of arranging its ideas, different from the ordinary run of conversation. It was soon discovered that poetry would have this effect; that, if once a succession of occurrences could be arranged in a series of measures, so that each phrase might occupy its own place alone in the system, half of the original difficulty would be moved. To this cause we attribute the circumstance, that no history or prose composition of any kind existed before poetry had already arrived at a high degree of perfection.

If we turn from this general principle, to consider the case of the ancient Caledonians, a people who have been more permanent than any other in Europe, and have retained, almost until our own times, the manners and costumes of the most remote antiquity, we might be prepared to expect that much traditionary lore would exist among them that might throw light upon their former history. Within the last 100 years have appeared several collections of ancient poems, said to have been written at a very remote period, and to have been preserved entire by oral recitation alone. That recitation may be the vehicle by which poems may be handed down during three or four hundred years, is a fact which the preservation of the poems of Homer, from the eleventh century before Christ to the eighth, when they were first reduced to writing, as it is said by Pistratus, Solon, or Lycurgus, may be considered to be sufficiently established. But when the Caledonian poems before alluded to were first published, 1500 years had elapsed since the period when they were said to have been composed. In so long a space of time, whole nations and languages have disappeared from the face of the earth, and it is difficult to conceive that unwritten verses could have lived through so many generations, without very great changes not only of phraseology, but even of the whole texture of their versification. It will probably have been already anticipated, that allusion is here made principally to the poems of Ossian, first published in an English translation by James Macpherson, about the middle of the last century. The author of these verses was said to have lived about the year A.D. 300, though the earliest mention that is made of him occurs in the poems of Barbour, a writer of the fourteenth century.

Amongst the poems of the collection is one, entitled COMALA, which, if genuine, in a remarkable manner refers to the events of the war which forms the subject of our last chapter. "The chase is over," said Dersagrena, one of the damsels waiting for the return of Fingal, the Caledonian warrior: "No noise on Ardven but the torrent's roar, ... lay down the bow, and take the harp: let the night come on with songs, let our joy be great on Ardven." . . . . Again the same damsel speaks, "These are the signs of Fingal's death: the king of shields is fallen, and CARACUL prevails. Rise, Comala[a], from thy rock . . . the youth of thy love is low: his ghost is on our hills!" . . . .

COMALA. "Confusion pursue thee over thy plains: ruin overtake thee, thou king of the world! Few be thy steps to the grave!" . . . .

MELILCOMA [*sister to Dersagrena*]. "What sound is that on Ardven? Who is that bright in the vale? Who comes like the strength of rivers, when their crowded waters glitter to the moon?" . . . .

COMALA. "Who is it but the foe of Comala, the son of the king of the world? Ghost of Fingal! do thou, from thy cloud, direct Comala's bow!" . . . .

FINGAL [*enters safe from the battle*]. "Raise, ye bards, the song; raise the wars of the streamy Carun! Caracul has fled from our arms along the fields of his pride. He sets far distant like a meteor, that incloses a spirit of night, when the winds drive it over the heath, and the dark woods are gleaming around." . . . .

To review the whole question concerning the authenticity of these poems, is incompatible with the limits of a work not expressly written for the purpose: the conclusion, to which those who have investigated it

[a] Comala is the lover of Fingal.

have generally arrived, whilst it exonerated Macpherson from having attempted to practise an imposition upon the world, has left an unfavourable impression of his accuracy, and convicts him of having unfaithfully represented the compositions of the original poet. It can scarcely be doubted, that these verses were not written by Macpherson himself, but that they existed in shreds and fragments, which he put together so as to form complete poems; and that he made transpositions, corrections, and additions with no sparing hand. But the lapse of fourteen centuries must have changed much of the language of the Caledonians, and of the phraseology of the poems: so that probably little but the sense and the outline of those compositions have come down to us. Even with this view of the modifications which they have received, it is remarkable, that the "king of the world" should so accurately describe Severus the Roman emperor; and that Caracul should point to his son and successor Caracalla, at times the leader of the Roman armies; and, if Fingal can be taken as a genuine Caledonian warrior, not unlikely to have encountered him on the banks of the Carron, as recited in the lines of the old Caledonian bard.

The son and successor of Severus was in every respect unworthy of his father. Immediately after the death of the old man, taking into his own hands the reins of government, he immediately put to death all the officers of the household: the physicians, because they would not use foul play against his father as he had requested them, and the tutors of himself and brother, because they troubled him with their exhortations to agree together. In short, he suffered none to remain alive who had enjoyed any office, or

been in attendance on the deceased. He also secretly courted the commanders of the army by gifts and ample promises, that they should persuade the army to make him sole emperor; and he sought every pretext to undermine his brother: but the troops were unmoved by all his solicitations, for they cherished the memory of the father, whose two sons, as they had nursed them alike in their infancy, they now honoured with equal loyalty and submission. Failing in this attempt on the soldiery[b], and finding that the war with the barbarians did not prosper, he made peace with them without delay, and, withdrawing all his troops and garrisons from their country[c], hastened into the south, to join his brother and mother. When they met, the mother and their father's councillors tried to bring the sons to a good understanding with one another. But Caracalla, seeing that every thing went against his wishes, by compulsion rather than of his own free will, was obliged to acknowledge his brother as possessing equal rank with himself, and to admit him to his share of the government. Having thus made a league of peace and friendship, as hollow and deceitful as it was short in its duration, the two brothers left Britain, and hastened to Rome, carrying with them the remains of their father. They had consumed the body with fire, and placed the ashes together with aromatics in an alabaster urn; this they carried to Rome, to be deposited in the tomb of the emperors[d].

By the departure of the two brothers, the north of Britain was again, in the beginning of the year 211,

[b] Ἐπεὶ μὴ προεχώρει αὐτῷ τὰ τῶν στρατοπέδων. Herod. iii. 51.

[c] Zonaras, Hist. v. 19.

[d] Herodian. iii. 51. Xiphil. lxxvii. 1.

after a severe campaign of two years, freed from further invasion, and as far off as ever from being reduced to obedience to the Roman dominion.

From this point of our history, a long period of time is passed over by historians with hardly a single notice of the events which occurred in Britain. The reign of Caracalla lasted till the year A. D. 217, when he was put out of the way by assassination, and gave place to Macrinus, who was himself murdered within two years. After him, Elagabalus was raised to the throne, a young man whose extravagant acts, whilst he was at the head of the Roman empire, can only be palliated or excused by the suspicion that his intellects were disordered. To Elagabalus succeeded his cousin Alexander, surnamed Severus, from the strictness of discipline which he maintained in the Roman armies. This excellent prince governed the Roman empire from A. D. 222 to A. D. 237, and was at last murdered, like so many of his predecessors, by his own soldiers. "The place where this occurred," says Lampridius[e], "was Sicila, a village of Britain, or, as others say, of Gaul." Alexander happened to be there with a smaller attendance than usual, when some of his soldiers, who had a grudge against him on account of his severity, set upon him, and slew him.

After his death, thirteen[f] emperors ruled the empire in succession until the year 276: their united reigns

[e] Lamp. in Al. Sev. 59. The same story is found in Aurelius Victor, who wrote [A.D. 360.] eighty years after Lampridius; but he omits the words, "or as others say in Gaul." It is certain that Alexander Severus never was in Britain.

[f] Maximin, Gordian, Philip, Decius, Gallus, Æmilian, Valerian, Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius, Aurelian, Tacitus, and Florian, are the names of the emperors who reigned from 235 to 276.

amount to only forty years, a melancholy proof of the unsettled character of the times, and of the brief tenure by which successful aspirants to the purple enjoyed the object of their ambition. During the whole of this period historians are silent about Britain, and the only remaining records are limited to a few inscriptions found in different parts of the country, in which mention is made of the Roman emperor who reigned during the interval. The first of these, to which we shall here allude, was erected in the time of Gordian, and proves, that Nonnius Philippus was proprætor of Britain in A.D. 243, and that paganism was still flourishing in the island.

I. O. M.
PRO SALVTE IMPERATORIS
M. ANTONI GORDIANI P. F.
INVICTI AVG. ET SABINIAE TR-
IAE TRANQVILE CONIVGI EIVS TO-
TAQVE DOMV DIVIN. EORVM A-
LA AVG. GORDIA. OB VIRTVTEM
APELLATA POSVIT: CVI PRAE EST
AEMILIVS CRISPINVS PRAEF.
EQQ. NATVS IN PRO AFRICA DE
TVIDRO SVB CVR NONNII PHI
LIPPI LEG. AVG. PROPRETO. . . . . .
ATTICO ET PRETEXTATO
COSS.

To Jupiter Optimus Maximus
For the health of the emperor
M. Antonius Gordianus P. F.
Invincible Augusta and Sabinia Fur-
ia Tranquilla his wife and all
their divine family the
troop Augusta Gordiana, for their bravery
so called, hath placed this stone: which troop is commanded

by Æmilius Crispinus præfect
of the cavalry, born in . . . Africa . .
. . . . under the care of Nonnius Philippus, lieutenant of Augustus, proprætor
in the consulship of Atticus and Prætextatus. [A.D.243.][e]

Another inscription is addressed to the emperor Philip and his son of the same name, [A.D.246.]

IMP. CAES. | M. IVL. | PHILIPPO |
PIO FELI | CI | AVG | ET M. IVL PHI- |
LIPPO NOBILIS | SIMO CAES. | TR. P. COS. . . . . .

To the emperor Cæsar | *M. Julius* | *Philippus* | *the pious the fortunate* | *Augustus* | *and M. Jul. Philippus most noble Cæsar* | *Tribune of the people Consul.* [A.D.247.][h]

During the reign of Gallienus, who indulged in every kind of debauchery, the Roman empire fell into the utmost disorder and anarchy. A large number of usurpers arose in different places, to whom history has given the name of the thirty tyrants, though it is certain that they did not amount to more than half of that number. Of these, Lollianus, Victorianus, Postumus, the two Tetrici and Marius, are supposed to have assumed the sovereignty in this island, because their coins have been dug up more abundantly here than elsewhere. In the reign of Aurelian, an officer in the Roman army, named Bonosus, famous for his capacity of drinking, proclaimed himself emperor in conjunction with Proculus, and asserted his right to all Britain, Spain, and part of Gaul. This man was a Spaniard by birth, but his ancestors were from Britain, and his mother was of Gaul: his father, according to his own account, was by profession a rhetorician, but, according to others, a

[e] Found in Cumberland. Camden's Brit. Gough, vol. iii. p. 424.

[h] Found near Thoresby in Cumberland. See Gough's Britannia, vol. iii. p. 425.

school-master. Bonosus lost his father, when he was still young, but, as his mother was a woman of a strong and commanding mind, her son received from her the elements of a sound education. After vainly endeavouring to excite in his favour the inhabitants of the provinces, where he assumed the purple, Bonosus was defeated by the troops of Probus, who at this time was emperor. In despair at his defeat, he hanged himself; and the Roman soldiers, remembering his powers of drinking, observed in derision, that "it was a bottle and not a man that was hanging there!" The emperor Probus, we are told, recompensed the fidelity of the Britons, Gauls, and Germans in resisting the solicitations of Bonosus, by granting them permission to cultivate the grape, and to manufacture wine[j].

Zosimus[k] also relates, that a colony of Vandals and Burgundians was planted by Probus in Britain, where they subsequently distinguished themselves as loyal servants of the Roman state. After the death of Bonosus, another claimant of the purple meditated a revolt in Britain. His name has not been handed down to us, but at the request of Victorinus Maurusius, a courtier who possessed much influence with Probus, this man had been appointed to the government. As soon as Probus learnt that another contest for the empire most probably awaited him, he reproached Victorinus with having lent his influence to elevate an unfaithful officer. Victorinus entreated the emperor to be permitted to go to Britain; and having received the consent of the emperor, he set out on his journey, and crossed over into the island, pretending to have fled from the emperor, and soliciting protection. The usurper received him kindly, and was murdered in the night by

[j] Vopiscus in Prob. 18. et Bonos. 14. [k] Hist. lib. i. 68.

Victorinus, who returned with all speed to the court of Probus, having vindicated himself from a charge of treachery by an act of treachery and murder combined[l].

The successor of Probus was Carus, who reigned in the year 283 and 284. He appointed his two sons, Carinus and Numerian, to the office of Cæsar, and assigned to the charge of the eldest the defence of Italy, Gaul, Illyricum, Spain, and Britain. Some writers have said, that Carinus carried on the war personally in Britain, and they quote as their authority the lines of Nemesian:

> Thy glorious deeds far as the frozen North
> Demand my song, and call me to set forth
> The son surpassing his immortal sire[m].

but the vague language of poetry cannot be admitted as a sufficient authority for such a supposition: probability rather confirms the statement of the historian[n], who tells us, that the young prince, neglectful of the duties which devolved on him, and careless of the decline which was now rapidly progressing in the empire, disgraced his character by indulgence in the most abominable vices.

The next emperor after Carus and his two sons, was Diocletian, a man of ability and energy for the age in which he lived, and qualified perhaps more than any of his contemporaries to check for a time the downward progress of the state. But the care of so large an empire was too much for one emperor, and the principle of having an associate in the government was now become a matter of necessity. To relieve himself of a portion of his labours, Diocletian made choice of Maximian as his partner in the empire, and the new emperor

[l] Zonaras iv. 7. Zosimus i. 66.
[m] Nemesian Cyneg. 69.
[n] Vopiscus in Carin. i.

immediately occupied himself with the important charge which he had undertaken. About this time the northern nations began to make themselves truly formidable to the degenerate Romans: two tribes, not heard of in former ages, the Franks and the Saxons, now harassed without intermission the coasts of Gaul, Holland, Belgium, and Britain. Their incursions, being carried on principally by sea, were the more destructive, because it was out of the power of the inhabitants to foresee where they would next appear, and consequently impossible to assemble in sufficient force to oppose them. That these countries might not be totally lost to their government, the emperor appointed Carausius to command a fleet stationed at Gesoriacum, or Boulogne, with orders to intercept and destroy the piratical tribes who infested those narrow seas. Carausius is called by the historians a citizen of Menepia[o], but it is not agreed what interpretation is to be put upon this name. Some suppose him to have belonged to the Belgian tribe of the Menapii, others to have been a native of Menavia, or St. David's in Wales; but it is evident, that the absence of more specific statements of original writers must preclude us from coming to a decision on this point. But, whatever was the birth of Carausius, he was an able commander and expert sailor: and so distinguished himself in the war carried on by Maximian against the pirates, that his appointment to the command of the fleet was not only the just reward of his services, but seemed the most judicious course that could be adopted to protect the Roman commerce. But this promotion inspired views of

[o] Aurel. Vict. de Cæs. 39. Eutropius, ix. 21. and Orosius, vii. 25. describe him as a man of low origin, but are silent about the place of his birth.

ambition, which would be ascribed to a want of public principle in any other age, when ideas of justice and of patriotism had a definite existence: but in the distracted condition to which Europe was then reduced, and the low state to which the laws of morality had fallen, the conduct of Carausius is not worse than that of nearly all his contemporaries; and, on the other hand, his failings are set off by merits peculiarly his own. On first receiving the charge of the fleet, he set himself diligently to fulfil the duties of his office. Many of the barbarous Franks and Saxons were taken prisoners, and a check was put to their piracies: but it was at length found out, that the Roman commander neither restored the booty which he had recaptured, nor delivered it over to the government: and there were good reasons to suspect, that Carausius allowed the pirates to make their captures, that he might afterwards set upon them on their return, and secure for himself the booty which they had taken. The report of these proceedings at last reached the ears of Maximian, who immediately issued orders that Carausius should be put to death. But Carausius was soon apprised of the emperor's intentions, and of the sentence which had been passed on him. How far he had prepared himself for such a course of conduct, we are left to conjecture; but it now became evident, that if he wished to preserve his life, it must be at the sacrifice of his duty to the emperor. Carausius at once assumed the imperial purple, declared himself independent of Diocletian and Maximian, and prepared to maintain his pretensions with all the forces he could muster[p]. The sailors of the fleet were so

[p] Jornandes de regn. suc. 7.

attached to their commander, that they all to a man declared in his favour, and thus the only means of which his enemies might readily avail themselves to reduce him to obedience, became the instruments of his success. Other ships of war were constructed without delay on the model of those which he now had: a Roman legion, and several troops of foreign soldiers, were either by compulsion or stratagem secured to his cause; many of the traders from Gaul were induced to enlist in his army; even the barbarians furnished large supplies of men, allured by the wealth which had been gathered from the spoils of the provinces, and was now unsparingly employed to strengthen him in the enterprise which he had undertaken. All these levies were instructed in naval tactics under the tuition of the greatest admiral of the age; and it is not surprising that success smiled upon the attempt. On the other hand, the interests of Maximian suffered from the same causes which elevated his rival. The Romans were never very apt in acquiring naval science, and the abstraction of all their fleet was a blow which could not easily be remedied. All those who were apprehensive of punishment, for social or political offences, naturally fled to Carausius; and the rough waves of the northern seas, which three hundred and fifty years before had astonished and alarmed the soldiers of Julius Cæsar, struck a terror into their degenerate descendants, which prevented them from speedily attacking the bold usurper[q].

To heighten still more the difficulties which at this time surrounded the empire, whilst Carausius was conducting his successful revolt in Britain, Achilleus

[q] Eumen. Paneg. Const. Cæs. dict. c. 9—19.

was rebelling in Egypt; the Quinquegentians were infesting Africa, and Narseus, king of Persia, pressed the provinces of the east with unceasing warfare. It was therefore impossible for Diocletian to assist his colleague; and it hardly surprises us, that Maximian, after trying in vain to reduce the usurper by arms, at last concluded a peace with him, bestowing on him the title of Augustus, and entrusting to him the care of those provinces which Carausius had already occupied without Maximian's permission. The peace with Carausius was made in the year 289, and two or three years after, two new Cæsars were appointed, Constantius and Galerius, to assist the emperors in supporting the burden and maintaining the frontiers of the empire[r]. The former of these is said to have been the grandson of the emperor Claudius, by his daughter; Maximianus Galerius was born in Dacia, not far from Sardica. To unite these by relationship also, Constantius married Theodora the daughter-in-law of Herculius, who afterwards bore him six sons, brothers of Constantine; and Galerius married Valeria, Diocletian's daughter. Both of them were compelled to repudiate their former wives.

These cares distracted the attention of Diocletian and Maximian, and gave Carausius time to arrange the business of his insular sovereignty. Of the measures by which he maintained his independence in Britain during seven years, the Roman historians are silent: but we are assured by Venerable Bede[s], who wrote A. D. 730, that Carausius defended and maintained with vigour the sovereignty which he had invaded; and Nennius[t], who wrote still later,

[r] Eutropius ix. 22. [s] Bed. Hist. Eccl. i. 19. [t] Nenn. Hist. Brit. c. 19, 20.

records, that he defeated the Britons with much loss, and rebuilt the wall which had been originally constructed by Severus, strengthening it by the erection of seven additional towers at various distances between the two extremities. In triumph for his victory over these nations, Carausius erected on the banks of the river Carron, which is said, but no doubt erroneously, to have derived its name from him, a "round house with polished stones," and a triumphal arch, in imitation of similar trophies erected by former emperors at Rome. But the author of this was not Nennius, though the passage appears in his work; it has probably been interpolated at a later period, for the appellation of Picts and Scots, which is there given for the first time to the Caledonians, does not occur in other writers until a later date.

Whilst, however, the Roman historians say little of the brave man who defied for so long a time the power of their emperors, the traditions of the Caledonians, if we are to believe those legendary poems of Ossian and others, which we have before quoted in this work[u], have not omitted to record the deeds of one of the most powerful of their enemies; and the "war of Caros" may perhaps contain faint traces of the contests which Carausius waged against those northern tribes.

"'What does Caros, king of ship?' said the son of the now mournful Ossian; 'spreads he the wings[x] of his pride, bard of the times of old?'—'He spreads them, Oscar,' replied the bard, 'but it is behind his gathered heap: he looks over his stones with fear: he beholds thee terrible, as the ghost of night, that rolls the wave to his ships!'—'Go, thou first of my bards!'

[u] See p. 248. [x] The Roman eagle.

says Oscar, 'take the spear of Fingal: fix a flame on its point: shake it to the winds of heaven: bid him in songs to advance, and leave the rolling of his wave. Tell to Caros, that I long for battle; that my bow is weary of the chase of Cona. Tell him the mighty are not here; and that my arm is young.' . . .

"Ryno came to the mighty Caros: he struck his flaming spear. Come to the battle of Oscar, O thou that sittest on the rolling of the waves. . . . .

"The heroes move with their songs. Oscar slowly ascends the hill. . . . Oscar drew his sword! 'Come,' said the hero, 'O ye ghosts of my fathers! ye that fought against the KINGS OF THE WORLD!'

"Oscar passed the night among his fathers; grey morning met him on Carun's banks. A green vale surrounded a tomb which arose in the times of old. Little hills lift their heads at a distance, and stretch their old trees to the wind. The warriors of Caros sat there, for they had passed the stream by night. . . . . A thousand spears arose around; the people of Caros rose. . . . . The battle came, but they fell: bloody was the sword of Oscar.

"The noise reached his people at Crona; they came like a hundred streams: the warriors of Caros fled. Oscar remained like a rock left by the setting sun. Now dark and deep with all his steeds, Caros rolled his night along: the little streams are lost in his course; the earth is rocking round: battle spreads from wing to wing; ten thousand swords gleam at once in the sky. But why should Ossian sing of battles? For never more shall my steel shine in war. I remember the days of my youth with grief, when I feel the weakness of my arm. Happy are they who fell in their youth, in the midst of their renown! They have not

beheld the tombs of their friends, or failed to bend the bow of their strength. Happy art thou, O Oscar, in the midst of thy rushing blast. Thou often goest to the fields of thy fame, where CAROS fled from thy lifted sword!"

These lines remind the classical reader of those expressions in the Roman historians, which speak of the success of the usurper, of his wars with the Caledonians, and of the wall which he built or repaired to protect himself from their incursions: they add moreover, what the Roman writers have omitted to mention, that Caros or Carausius recoiled from the bold barbarians of the north, who still maintained the independence of their country, which so many imperial armies had assailed in vain. But the genuineness of these poems has not been sufficiently established to authorize their being cited for facts which history has not recorded. We may regret, that the picture which they offer has not sufficient guarantee for its fidelity, and may express a hope, that he who first published them to the world, could hardly have been so base as to create from his own fancy the personages, who give such life to the narrative, and such verisimilitude to the history.

But a more undoubted source of information for the reign of Carausius in Britain, are his coins, which remain in such abundance, that every one who forms a numismatic cabinet may without difficulty procure a large number of those which were struck by Carausius in this island. The reverses, however, of these authentic relics of antiquity furnish us with little additional information concerning the northern tribes who were at war with Carausius, but, like all other monuments of the Romans, pass over in silence every thing except what happens among themselves. They shew that

Carausius, though owing his success to the natural advantages which Britain possesses for asserting her liberties against all the world, was little disposed to identify himself with the mass of its people, and chose rather to affect, in a remote province, all the state and dignity of a Roman empire. On the coins and medals of this prince we read the proud titles, IMPERATOR CAIVS CARAVSIVS PIVS FELIX AVGVSTVS, *The emperor Caius Carausius the Pious, the Happy, Augustus!* On the reverse are different inscriptions, indicating the different acts of the drama which he was playing. The words CONCORDIA AVGG. *The concord of the Augusti!* record the treaty entered into by Maximian after his ineffectual attempt to expel Carausius from his newly-acquired sovereignty. PAX AVG. *The peace of Augustus!* TRANQVILLITAS AVG. *The tranquillity of Augustus!* SAECVLI FELICITAS, *The happiness of the age!* plainly indicate the prosperity which was supposed to be enjoyed by the people of the insular empire: whilst ADVENTVS AVG. *The coming of Augustus!* probably describes the joy which his first arrival in Britain occasioned, in a less degree perhaps to the people, than to himself who had escaped out of the hands of the bloody-intentioned Maximian!

It has been said by modern writers, that the term during which Carausius reigned was one of great prosperity to Britain: and his name is thought to exist still in the Carsdike of Cambridge, besides other works which are supposed to have proceeded from his creative genius. But the peace which Maximian had granted was rather a respite than a cessation from war, and Carausius could not calculate upon its long continuance. The appointment of two new Cæsars, Constantius and Galerius, infused new vigour into the veins of the

empire. The imperial sceptre was more powerful in the hands of four associates, each possessing no mean abilities to command; and Constantius, to whose lot fell the provinces of the west, prepared himself in an incredibly short time to wrest from his bold rival the possession of the British island, and the continental territories which he held. To effect this purpose, the first step which Constantius took was to lay siege to the town of Gessoriacum, or Boulogne, with the numerous troops which he had so rapidly levied. Of the events which then happened, no historical records remain to us; all that we know of them is derived from the panegyrical Orations addressed to the reigning emperors by Eumenius, Drepanius, and others, who were contemporary with the facts which they relate, but may reasonably be supposed to have clothed them in such ornaments as would best please or flatter the prince in whose praise they were delivered. Yet the panegyric[r] of Eumenius, spoken in the year 296, gives us a tolerable idea of the progress made by Constantius at the end of A.D. 292.

"By the promptitude of your arrival, illustrious Cæsar, you made Gaul your own. The rapidity of your movements, by which you anticipated the news of your coming, brought surprise and fatal error to that piratical crew, who were shut up within the walls of Gessoriacum, and deprived them, notwithstanding their former trust in the sea, of the use of the very waves which flowed up to their gates. In this too your heaven-sent prudence, and success equalling your prudence, were most apparent, for all that expanse of water which at stated times is brought up by the alternating tide, was rendered inaccessible to ships by the piles which you fixed across,

[r] Eumen. Pan. Const. Cæs. dict. A.D. 296, c. 6.

and the stones which you heaped in upon them; and thus you surmounted the natural difficulties of the spot by your admirable ingenuity: the sea in vain rising after every ebb seemed to mock those whose escape you had cut off, as if it was no longer of service to the besieged, as if it had altogether ceased to flow!"

Carausius, however, had little trust in his army, which could hardly equal half of that which Constantius had brought against it. He at once saw the danger of meeting his foe by land, and fled with all haste to Britain, before the harbour of Boulogne was blocked up. The narrative may be resumed in the words of Mamertinus, who in the same year, immediately after the taking of Boulogne, delivered a Panegyric to the emperors Diocletian and Maximian[1]:

"Such has been your good fortune, great emperors, that your armies have now reached the shores of the ocean, and the ebbing waves have engulphed the corpses of your enemies, who lie dead upon that coast. What must now be the feelings of that pirate, [Carausius,] when he sees your armies passing over that strait, which has hitherto been the only barrier between him and death, and, heedless of danger, following the very ocean in its retreat? What other distant island is there for him to retire to? What other ocean remains to protect him? How will he now escape punishment from the republic, unless the earth yawns to receive him, or the whirlwind carries him far away into the desert? Our noble ships are furnished with every equipment, and ready to launch into the ocean from every river's mouth."

We resume the narrative of Eumenius, which explains a brief delay, imposed by the necessity of

[1] Mamert. Paneg. Max. Herc. dict. A.D. 292, c. 11. 12.

circumstances on Constantius, ere he could safely follow Carausius to his insular retreat. "The whole war, invincible Cæsar [Constantius], might have been ended by the first impulse of your valour and your good fortune; but it was necessary to allow time, that ships might be built for the undertaking: but this did not prevent you from employing the interval to reduce those enemies, who were accessible, because they lived upon the main land[a]." .... "Forgive me, Cæsar, if I am at one time too rapid, at another too slow, in recording your deeds. I omit many events which occurred, whilst your passage to Britain was in preparation, admirable achievements of your valour! whilst I hasten to that singular victory, by which the integrity of the republic was at last vindicated. Its magnitude will be best explained, if I first shew, how necessary, how difficult, was the war, by which this consummation was effected.

"The separation of these provinces from the Roman privileges under the emperor Gallienus, however melancholy, was less disgraceful than this last. For at that time, either by some negligence, or the decrees of destiny, the republic was mutilated in all its members.... But at present, when the whole world had been subdued, not only those parts of it where the Roman soldier had once trodden, but those also which were occupied by the barbarians; we are not ashamed to confess, that the abstraction of Britain was a reproach upon all of us not to be endured. That island still passes under the general name of Britain, but its loss was no trifle to the republic, so productive is it in fruit, and fertile in pastures, so rich in metals, and valuable for its contributions to the treasury, sur-

[a] Ibid. c. 7.

rounded on all sides with abundance of harbours, and an immense line of sea-coast."

To raise a fleet able to cope with that of Carausius, was an exertion that called forth all the energy of Constantius; and four more years elapsed after the capture of Boulogne, before the Cæsar ventured to assemble his men, and attempt to pass the sea in the fleet which he had equipped. In the mean time, the treachery of a friend and confidential minister removed out of the way of Constantius the formidable enemy, against whom he was using so much precaution. In A. D. 293, Carausius, after a reign of seven years, was basely murdered by Allectus, who succeeded to the honours of sovereignty lately enjoyed by his victim [b]. The success which attended this base action was not maintained by abilities equal to those of the deceased. Allectus held the sovereign power in Britain three years, and illustrated his claims to the imperial dignity by assuming titles, and striking coins, bearing all the proud appellations which were supposed to belong to the station which he affected. He possibly maintained the fleet in the same state in which his predecessor had left it; but a greater guarantee for his temporary security was the incompleteness of the preparations of Constantius, which prevented him from yet attempting to reconquer Britain. At length, in the year 296, the Cæsar felt himself in a condition to renew his intentions of crossing the sea to meet the rebel army in the island, where they had during ten years set at nought the threats, and defied the power, of all the Roman world. The rhetorical language of

[b] Eumenius Pan. Const. Cæs. dict. A. D. 296, c. 3. Eutrop. Hist. ix. 22. Oros. vii. 25.

the panegyrist[c], who drew his information from some of the soldiers of Constantius, will be the vehicle to inform the reader of the events which followed.

"This, Cæsar, was the warfare which you undertook; and from the moment that your majesty aimed its thunders at the enemy, we considered the war as ended. So variously did you arrange your troops and distribute your fleets, that the enemy, uncertain of your attack, and not knowing how to defend himself, at length perceived that he was not defended by the Ocean, but a prisoner within its waves.

"Unlike former princes, who remained at home, and by their auspices alone conducted foreign wars, you, invincible Cæsar, entered yourself into the toils of that sea voyage, and encouraged your men both by your precept and your example. You were the first to set forth from Gessoriacum upon the Ocean; and when your army, sailing down the Seine, had joined you, though its commanders hesitated, and had fears of the state of the weather and of the waves, yet the soldiers and sailors, inspired by your exhortations, cried out for the signal to weigh anchor, despised the threatening symptoms of bad weather, and put to sea on a rainy day, content to trust themselves to a side-wind, because it would not blow upon their stern[d]. But who would not commit himself to the sea, however stormy, if YOU were to conduct the navigation? It is said, that all to a man, when they heard that you were going with them, cried out with one voice, 'Why do we hesitate? why waste the time? He is already weighing anchor, he is

[c] Eumenius Pan. Const. Cæs. dict. A.D. 296. c. 3.

[d] This seems to imply, that it was thought dangerous in those days to sail with a side-wind. If so, it shews that no great progress had been yet made in the art of navigation.

already on his voyage, and perhaps has landed. Let us brave every wind, no matter what waves may rise against us. What can we have to fear, when we follow in the track of Cæsar?'

"And this belief in your good fortune was not disappointed. For, as we have heard from some of those very men, the fogs so covered the whole surface of the sea, that the hostile fleet, which had been placed at the Isle of Wight to look out and take us by surprise, were ignorant of our being near them, and we passed safely by them, without experiencing the slightest delay, much less opposition, at their hands. Thus, when your invincible army, landing on the coast of Britain, immediately set fire to all their ships, what but the inspiration of your divine impulse led them to this act? what other motive led them to cut off all their chance of escape, and to despise the common dangers of war, if not the contemplation of your greatness, the certainty of victory? They had no thought of human force or human power, but solely that they were fighting under your divine auspices. When battle lies before the soldier, to promise himself success, flows rather from the good fortune of the general, than his own temerity. But why did the leader of that iniquitous crew [Allectus] withdraw from the shore which he had occupied? why did he leave his fleet and the harbour, but because he feared your coming, invincible Cæsar, when he saw your sails floating above the waves? He chose rather to share the fortune of his officers, than to await the impending thunders of your majesty. Madman that he was, he knew not that, wherever he might flee, he would meet the power of your divinity, wherever your countenance shone, wherever men bowed the knee before your ensigns!

" But, though he fled from you, he fell into the hands of your soldiers: from you he received his defeat, by your armies he was at last destroyed. So overwhelmed with fear was he at your approach, that he rushed, as it were, on death, without marshalling his ranks, or bringing into action all the troops which he had brought with him, but only those veterans who had first conspired with him, and the bands of barbarians whom he had enlisted. Thus, Cæsar, by the favour of your good fortune, the empire of Rome triumphed, without the effusion of Roman blood: for, as I have heard, all those extensive plains and hills are covered with no corpses but those of the most ignoble of our enemies. Those barbarians, whether really or apparently so, who once blazed with splendid garments and length of hair, were then defiled with blood and dust, and lay scattered in different directions, as the anguish of their wounds had driven them. The leader of that noble band, casting off the robes which alive he had violated, was with difficulty found among the dead, a single article of his dress indicating where his corpse was lying.

" Such, invincible Cæsar, was the consent of the immortal Gods upon your achievements, that your destruction of the enemy, and especially of those of them who were Franks, became most signal and complete: for when those of your soldiers, who had been separated by a fog from the others, arrived at the town of London, they put to death in the streets of the city a large number of that mercenary multitude, who had fled thither from the battle, and hoped to escape and bear with them the plunder of that city.

" By this victory, not only Britain was freed from slavery, but security was given to all other nations also,

which, in passing over the sea on pursuits of commerce, might derive as much injury from war, as benefit from the reestablishment of peace.

"Truly then may it be said, that you landed as a liberator on the British shores: the natives with wives and children met you with acclamations, and looked upon you as one descended from heaven to their aid. They even worshipped the sails and oars of the ship which brought you, and were prepared to carpet the road for you with their bodies. Nor was this wonderful: after a wretched slavery* of so many years, after their wives had been violated, their children consigned to slavery, they at last were freed, were restored to the liberties and privileges of Romans, and again rejoiced in the true light of the Roman empire!"

The island of Britain was thus reconquered; and Constantius, its victor, added it to the extensive provinces which, as Cæsar, he held under his dominion. In the year 304, he became emperor by the death of Diocletian. But his enjoyment of that rank was but of short duration, serving rather to usher into public notice his son and successor, Constantine the Great, who, though not superior in merits to his illustrious father, yet starting from the high point to which Constantius had attained, encircled his name with a ray of glory, which still lives in the pages of historians.

* This applies rather to the reign of Allectus than of his predecessor, who is thought to have been a good and humane governor: but the flatterer of Constantius may of course be excused for representing the enemy in the most unfavourable colours.

CHAP. XVI.

PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS FROM A.D. 303 TO 313—LESS VIOLENT IN BRITAIN—THE LEGEND OF THE PASSION OF SAINT ALBAN PROBABLY MUCH INTERPOLATED.

THE reign of Diocletian, for the most part honourable to the emperor, and affording to his subjects a stability somewhat unusual at this period of the empire, has received a stain, not easily to be effaced, from the religious persecution which broke out towards its conclusion. In the year 303*, not long before the abdication of Diocletian and Maximian, the new sect of the Christians had increased so fast and so extensively, that it was determined by the court to put to death all who could not be induced to return to the ancient modes of faith. This persecution, the tenth which has been recorded in the annals of the Church, raged with the greatest fury in Greece and Asia; but the mild character and benevolent administration of Constantius, father of Constantine the Great, would lead to the inference, that its violence was much mitigated in Britain, Germany, and Gaul. It is unfortunate for the cause of truth that the history of these transactions has come down to us principally from the pen of the

* This date is sufficiently ascertained. See Clinton's Fasti Romani, page 344.

ecclesiastical writers, who have not scrupled to interweave the grossest fables and most absurd legends into their narratives; and to invent tales, which, in the days of ignorance, served to delude the vulgar, but have cast such a doubt over the ecclesiastical history of the first three centuries, that it is now almost impossible to separate the true from the false.

The only writers who relate the effect of this persecution on Britain are Gildas and Venerable Bede, who, in the beginning of the eighth century, used great diligence to obtain all the information which could be procured concerning the times that preceded his own. His account of the persecution of Diocletian is as follows[b]:

"Diocletian in the East, and Maximian Herculius in the West, commanded the churches to be destroyed, and the Christians to be slain. This persecution was the tenth since the reign of Nero, and was more lasting and bloody than all others before it; for it was carried on incessantly for the space of ten years[c], with burning of churches, outlawing of innocent persons, and the slaughter of martyrs. At length[d] it reached Britain also, and many persons, with the constancy of martyrs, died in the confession of their faith.

At that time suffered St. Alban, of whom the priest Fortunatus, in the "Praise of Virgins," where he makes mention of the blessed martyrs that came to the Lord from all parts of the world, says,

> Albanum egregium fœcunda Britannia profert.
> *Then fertile Britain holy Alban bore.*

"This Alban, being yet a pagan, at the time when the

[b] Hist. Eccles. lib. i. c. 7.
[c] From 303 to 313.
[d] Denique.

cruelties of wicked princes were raging against Christians, gave entertainment in his house to a certain Clergyman, flying from his persecutors. This man he observed to be engaged in continual prayer and watching day and night: when on a sudden the Divine grace shining on him, he began to imitate the example of faith and piety which was set before him, and being gradually instructed by his wholesome admonitions, he cast off the darkness of idolatry, and became a Christian in all sincerity of heart. The aforesaid Clergyman having been some days entertained by him, it came to the ears of the wicked prince, that this holy confessor of Christ, whose time of martyrdom had not yet come, was concealed in Alban's house. Whereupon he sent some soldiers to make a strict search after him. When they came to the martyr's house, St. Alban immediately presented himself to the soldiers, instead of his guest and master, in the habit or long coat which he wore, and was led bound before the judge. It happened that the judge, at the time when Alban was carried before him, was standing at the altar, and offering sacrifice to devils. When he saw Alban, being much enraged that he should thus, of his own accord, put himself into the hands of the soldiers, and incur such danger in behalf of his guest, he commanded him to be dragged up to the images of the devils, before which he stood, saying, 'Because you have chosen to conceal a rebellious and sacrilegious person, rather than to deliver him up to the soldiers, that his contempt of the gods might meet with the penalty due to such blasphemy, you shall undergo all the punishment that was due to him, if you abandon the worship of our religion.' But St. Alban, who had voluntarily declared himself a Christian to the persecutors of the

faith, was not at all daunted at the prince's threats, but, putting on the armour of spiritual warfare, publicly declared that he would not obey the commands. Then said the judge, 'Of what family or race are you?' 'What does it concern you,' answered Alban, 'of what stock I am? If you desire to hear the truth of my religion, be it known to you, that I am now a Christian, and bound by Christian duties.' 'I ask your name,' said the judge, 'tell me it immediately!' 'I am called Alban by my parents,' replied he, 'and I worship and adore the true and living God, who created all things.' Then the judge, inflamed with anger, said, 'If you will enjoy the happiness of eternal life, do not delay to offer sacrifice to the great gods.' Alban rejoined, 'These sacrifices, which by you are offered to devils, neither can avail the subjects, nor answer the wishes or desires, of those that offer up their supplications to them. On the contrary, whosoever shall offer sacrifice to these images, shall receive the everlasting pains of hell for his reward.'

"The judge, hearing these words, and being much incensed, ordered this holy Confessor of God to be scourged by the executioners; believing he might by stripes shake that constancy of heart, on which he could not prevail by words. He, being most cruelly tortured, bore the same patiently, or rather joyfully, for our Lord's sake. When the judge perceived that he was not to be overcome by tortures, or withdrawn from the exercise of the Christian religion, he ordered him to be put to death. Being led to execution, he came to a river, which, with a most rapid course, ran between the wall of the town and the arena where he was to be executed. He there saw a multitude of persons of both sexes, and of several ages and con-

ditions, who were doubtlessly assembled by Divine instinct, to attend the blessed confessor and martyr, and had so taken up the bridge on the river, that he could scarce pass over that evening. In short, almost all had gone out, so that the judge remained in the city without attendance. St. Alban, therefore, urged by an ardent and devout wish to arrive quickly at martyrdom, drew near to the stream, and, on lifting up his eyes to heaven, the channel was immediately dried up, and he perceived that the water had departed, and made way for him to pass. Among the rest, the executioner, who was to have put him to death, observed this, and, moved by Divine inspiration, hastened to meet him at the place of execution; and, casting down the sword which he had carried ready drawn, fell at his feet, praying that he might rather suffer with the martyr, whom he was ordered to execute, or, if possible, instead of him. Whilst he thus from a persecutor was become a companion in the faith, and the other executioners hesitated to take up the sword which was lying on the ground, the reverend confessor, accompanied by the multitude, ascended a hill, about five hundred paces from the place, adorned, or rather clothed, with all kinds of flowers, having its sides neither perpendicular, nor even craggy, but sloping down into a most beautiful plain, worthy from its lovely appearance to be the scene of a martyr's sufferings. On the top of this hill St. Alban prayed that God would give him water, and immediately a living spring broke out before his feet, the course being confined, so that all men perceived that the river also had been dried up in consequence of the martyr's presence. Nor was it likely that the martyr, who had left no water remaining in the river, should

want some on the top of the hill, unless he thought it suitable to the occasion. The river, having performed the holy service, returned to its natural course, leaving a testimony of its obedience.*

"Here, therefore, the head of our most courageous martyr was struck off, and here he received the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love Him. But he who gave the wicked stroke, was not permitted to rejoice over the deceased; for his eyes dropped upon the ground, together with the blessed martyr's head.

"At the same time was also beheaded the soldier, who before, through the divine admonition, refused to give the stroke to the holy confessor. Of whom it is apparent, that though he was not regenerated by baptism, yet he was cleansed by the washing of his own blood, and rendered worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven. Then the judge, astonished at the novelty of so many heavenly miracles, ordered the persecution to cease immediately, beginning to honour the death of the saints, by which he before thought they might have been diverted from the Christian faith. The blessed Alban suffered death on the twenty-second day of June, near the city of Verulam, which is now by the English nation called Verlamacestir, or Varlingacestir, where afterwards, when peaceable Christian times were restored, a church of wonderful workmanship, and suitable to his martyrdom, was erected. In which place, there ceases not to this day the cure of sick persons, and the frequent working of wonders.

"At the same time suffered Aaron and Julius, citizens of Chester, and many more of both sexes, in several places; who, when they had endured sundry torments, and their limbs had been torn after an unheard of manner, yielded their souls up, to enjoy in the heavenly

city a reward for the sufferings which they had passed through."

The general accuracy of Venerable Bede is a point which modern writers acknowledge without difficulty: it is equally true that he has fallen into many errors, principally in the matter of dates, arising probably from the small number of books of which he could avail himself in a remote monastery of Northumberland, at so early a period as the commencement of the eighth century. It is also not surprising, that his implicit faith in all that his Church taught should have led him to attach much credit to miracles and legends of saints, which ought not to be admitted into sober history. The preceding account of Saint Alban's martyrdom bears upon its surface a legendary character, from which cool reason will have no difficulty in setting aside all that is miraculous and supernatural. But it is attended with a chronological difficulty of a more serious nature. It is clear from the words of Bede, that the persecution of which St. Alban was the victim, lasted ten years, which, by the agreement of all historians, are to be counted from its commencement in A. D. 303. The expression, "at length," which Bede employs to designate the time when this persecution reached Britain, implies that it did not commence in our island so soon as in those parts of Europe which were nearer to the emperor's residence. But Diocletian and Maximian abdicated the throne in A. D. 305, two years after the persecution commenced, and Constantius became emperor, having still under his immediate care the provinces of Britain and Gaul. "Happy were the people who enjoyed the benefit of his rule, unrestrained by any superior authority," are the words of the last writer, who has treated this subject at some length. "The

Christians, in particular, had occasion to rejoice under his administration. They possessed his confidence and protection: persecution was altogether extinguished[e]." There is little doubt that Constantius, from his well-known character for political prudence, tempered with humanity,—for men often act from mixed motives,—not only when he became emperor in 305, but during the whole time that he filled the office of Cæsar, did not enter into the spirit of persecution which characterized the last days of Diocletian and Maximian.

Three years after the edict of persecution was promulgated, Constantine, the son of Constantius, succeeded, by his father's death, to the imperial purple: and as he at a later period of life adopted the Christian religion, it is unlikely that he ever violently persecuted those who professed it. Thus it appears, that, during the whole ten years of its duration, Britain was singularly favoured by being under the government of a father and son, whose whole character was alien from a persecuting bias, whose power was competent to protect their subjects, and whose ambitious views, already directed towards sole empire, were very unlikely to lead them to create discontent, or to estrange from them so large a mass of supporters as the Christians.

If this view of the case is correct, it creates a difficulty in the history of St. Alban, which can scarcely be removed. But other doubts arise from the gradual increase which the legend has received in different ages. The narrative, just quoted in the words of Venerable Bede, is an amplification of the story told by Gildas, and gives a dramatic effect to what was originally very short, and concise. Neither of these

[e] Thackeray, vol. i. p 255.

writers tells us the name of the clergyman who found refuge in Alban's house, but we learn from writers who lived some hundreds of years later, that he was called Amphibalus; and Thomas Rudborne, in his "Major Historia," compiled about A.D. 1400, adds, "that not long after the passion of Saint Alban, Saint Amphibalus, with nine of his companions, was martyred at the town of Redburn, three miles from the city of Saint Alban's!" Time, it may be acknowledged, produces marvellous changes; but it cannot revive the knowledge of that, which no contemporary has recorded; and whilst the pen has misrepresented many facts, and hundreds of its records have perished by carelessness, barbarism, or old age, we never can hope to recal that which the labours of the pen have never consigned to memory.

In this concurrence of suspicious circumstances, if it is safe to hazard an opinion, we may suggest, that the fact of St. Alban's sentence, passed upon him for concealing some person obnoxious for his religion, is all that we know for certain about him; that Britain and Gaul, at that time governed by a mild and benevolent emperor, were not exposed to the same violence of persecution as the rest of Europe; that instances of death for the sole cause of religion must have been rare in this island; that persecution may have been carried on here in individual places, and by local magistrates, without the force or authority of the court; and that those writers, who have described its horrors, have drawn their narrative rather from the afflicted state of the continent of Europe, than from what happened in the island of Britain itself.

If this view should be thought consistent with reason or probability, it derives confirmation from

Bede's account of the sudden change produced by the revocation of the persecuting edict, applicable without a doubt to the empire in general, but hardly reconcileable with the fact, that Constantine, the first royal convert, was at that time reigning in Britain[f].

"When the storm of persecution ceased, the faithful Christians, who, during the time of danger, had hidden themselves in woods and deserts and secret caves, appearing in public, rebuilt the churches which had been levelled with the ground; founded, erected, and finished the temples of the holy martyrs, and, as it were, displayed their conquering ensigns in all places: they celebrated festivals, and performed their sacred rites with clean hearts and mouths. This peace continued in the churches of Britain until the time of the Arian madness, which, having corrupted the whole world, infected this island also with the poison of its errors; and when the plague was thus conveyed across the sea, all the venoms of every heresy immediately rushed into the island, ever fond of something new, and never holding firm to any thing[g]."

[f] This view of the case is confirmed by Gibbon. "The mild and humane temper of Constantius was averse to the oppression of any part of his subjects. The principal offices of his palace were exercised by Christians. He loved their persons, esteemed their fidelity, and entertained not any dislike to their religious principles. But as long as Constantius remained in the subordinate station of Cæsar, it was not in his power openly to reject the edicts of Diocletian, or to disobey the command of Maximian. His authority contributed, however, to alleviate the sufferings which he pitied and abhorred. He consented with reluctance to the ruin of the churches; but he ventured to protect the Christians themselves from the fury of the populace, and from the rigour of the laws. The provinces of Gaul (under which we may probably include those of Britain) were indebted for the singular tranquillity which they enjoyed, to the gentle interposition of their sovereign." Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, chap. xi.

[g] Bede, Eccl. Hist. b. i. c. 8.

CHAP. XVII.

RESIGNATION OF DIOCLETIAN AND MAXIMIAN, A.D. 305—GALERIUS AND CONSTANTIUS EMPERORS—CONSTANTIUS IN BRITAIN—CONSTANTINE ESCAPES TO HIS FATHER CONSTANTIUS—CONSTANTINE THE GREAT DEFEATS MAXENTIUS, AND BECOMES SOLE EMPEROR—SYNODS OF ARLES AND NICE.

In the year 305, Diocletian and Maximian astonished the world, by renouncing the dignity and rank for which so many candidates had sacrificed their lives, and retired to enjoy in a private station that peace of mind, or at least that personal quiet, which never is the lot of a reigning prince. When the intelligence of this event reached Constantius, he had been nine years[a] in Britain: and the popularity which he had gained was now probably his greatest safeguard against the effects of that jealousy, which often arose between those who succeeded to the imperial dignity. Galerius, who had enjoyed with Constantius the title of Cæsar, was now advanced to the higher rank of Augustus; and, if the same title was conferred on Constantius, we may suspect that Galerius, though in possession of the central provinces, did not think it safe or prudent to deny this honour to one, who was the favourite commander of the western portion of the empire. But Galerius fancied that he possessed a hostage for the good conduct of Constantius, in the person of his son

[a] From A. D. 296 to 305.

Constantine, who, instead of following his father into Gaul, had remained in the service of Diocletian, where he had distinguished himself by his military abilities, and gradually risen to the rank of a tribune of the first order.

This young man, now twenty-two years old, was the son of Constantius by Helena, concerning whom we have less authentic information than of any other female who has arrived at the imperial dignity, and been so celebrated by historians. "The offspring of an obscure marriage," are the words of the historian Eutropius[b]: "The son of Constantius, by his concubine Helen," is the more derogatory account of his birth given by Orosius[c]: but whatever may have been the family, or station in life, which Helena first enjoyed[d], we may vindicate the legitimacy of her son by the divorce of his mother, which was enforced by Diocletian, that Constantius might contract a second marriage with Theodora.

By the elevation of Galerius and Constantius, a vacancy occurred in the office of Cæsar, which had now become established in the constitution of the empire, and was indeed, from the great extent of territory, almost necessary to its defence from the barbarians who assailed it. Public rumour pointed out Constantine as the most deserving candidate; and this fame aggravated the jealousy and confirmed the hostility of Galerius. "The figure of Constantine was tall and majestic; he was dextrous in all his exercises, intrepid in war, affable in peace; in his whole conduct,

[b] Hist. x. 1.

[c] Oros. vii. 25. See also Zosimus ii. 8.

[d] It is unnecessary to refute the absurd story, that Helena was of British birth, and the daughter of king Coillus.

the active spirit of youth was tempered by habitual prudence; and while his mind was engrossed by ambition, he appeared cold and insensible to the allurements of pleasure. The favour of the people and soldiers, who had named him as a worthy candidate for the rank of Cæsar, served only to exasperate the jealousy of Galerius; and though prudence might restrain him from exercising any open violence, an absolute monarch is seldom at a loss how to execute a sure and secret revenge. Every hour increased the danger of Constantine, and the anxiety of his father, who, by repeated letters, expressed the warmest desire of embracing his son. For some time the policy of Galerius supplied him with delays and excuses, but it was impossible long to refuse so natural a request of his associate, without maintaining his refusal by arms. The permission[e] of the journey was reluctantly granted, and whatever precautions the emperor might have taken to intercept a return, the consequences of which he, with so much reason, apprehended, they were effectually disappointed by the incredible diligence of Constantine[f]. Leaving the palace of Nicomedia in

[e] Aurel. Victor [de Cæs. 40.] describes the flight of Constantine as resulting from the indignation which he felt, because Severus and Maximian had been preferred to himself for the office of Cæsar. Truth mostly lies in the middle, between two different stories, and often derives many of its features from both.

[f] Zosimus ii. 8. Lactant. de Morte Persec. 24. The former of these writers tells us the mode by which Constantine baffled pursuit. "Fearing lest he should be overtaken in his flight, (for his ambition of reigning was already manifest to many,) he maimed and rendered useless all the post-horses at each station he arrived at, and so prevented his pursuers from following him. In the mean time he arrived among the tribes where his father was." Gibbon calls this, "a foolish story," and adds, that "such a bloody execution, without

the night, he travelled post through Bithynia, Thrace, Dacia, Pannonia, Italy, and Gaul; and, amidst the joyful acclamations of the people, reached the port of Boulogne, in the very moment when his father was preparing to embark for Britain[g]."

The presence of the son was no doubt a source of consolation to Constantius in the administration of his government; but we cannot admit the assertion of those, who have described Constantine as attached, by the tie of birth, to the island, with which his name has been so much connected[h]. There can be little doubt that he now, in the year 306, passed into Britain for the first time; and the popularity, which he gained among the natives and inhabitants of the island, resulted from the talents and virtues which he displayed, during the

preventing a pursuit, would have scattered suspicions, and might have stopped his journey:" but to some readers the story may appear far from improbable. The historian may possibly have exaggerated it; for, if Constantine practised such an expedient at two or three of the most retired post-stations in the country, it would have been quite sufficient to stop every one who might pursue him. The story is confirmed by Anonymus Valesii, [p. 609.] "transiens summa festinatione veredis post se truncatis."

[g] Gibbon, Dec. and Fall of the Rom. Emp. chap. xiv. Eumen. Pan. Const. Aug. A.D. 310, c. 7, 8. Aurel. Victor. Epit. 41. Zosimus ii. 8. Euseb. de v. Const. i. 21. Lactant. de M. P. 24.

[h] The expression "illic oriendo" of the anonymous panegyrist, [Paneg. Max. et Con. d. A.D. 307, c. 4.] describes the rise of the fortune of Constantius, rather than the place of his birth. Nennius, or one of the later writers who have so largely interpolated the original text of Nennius, erroneously describes Constantius as 'the son,' instead of 'the father,' of Constantine the Great. [Nenn. Hist. Brit. §. 21.] Venerable Bede [Hist. Eccles. i. 8.] calls 'Constantine filium ex concubina Helena creatum.' Richard of Cirencester's words are more decisive, 'Constantii ex Britannica Helena filium:' but the authority of so recent a writer, unsupported by a single ancient historian, is of little weight to decide such a question.

short time that he assisted his father in the cares of government.

It was, in fact, now absolutely necessary that Constantius should have the advice and assistance of his son. "His health was beginning to decline, and he died within fifteen months after his accession to the empire. A contingency, so apt for the purposes of rhetoric, was not lost upon the panegyrist Eumenius, who a short time afterwards addressed Constantine on the crisis to which this meeting of father and son had brought his fortunes:

"You were already summoned to the empire by the lot of Heaven, when your sudden arrival shone like a light upon your father, as he was crossing over into Britain. . . . Good God! what happiness did you give to the pious Constantius, when he was on the point of leaving this world! That emperor, when about to make his passage to heaven, caught a sight of him who was to be his heir."

The meeting between Constantius and his son[i] was speedily followed by their departure for Britain, where a military expedition against the native tribes of the north was in preparation. This was not the first expedition that Constantius directed against the brave natives of Caledonia[k], but it does not appear that he attempted to make a perfect conquest, or to annex those indomitable mountaineers to the now overgrown Roman empire. It was perhaps from the same principles of prudence and moderation, that he declined to

[i] "Eusebius tells us, that the sick father leaped from his bed to embrace his son, and returned thanks to God that he had been spared to behold him." Thackeray, Res. &c. vol. i. p. 258. Philostorgius, lib. i. c. 5. Anonymus Valesii.

[k] Eumen. c. 7.

interfere in the affairs of Ireland; though the inhabitants of that island, induced probably by the prospect of greater happiness under a civilized government, offered to pay him tribute[l].

On the 25th of July, 306, the virtuous Constantius died at York, thirteen years after he was first made Cæsar, though his reign as Augustus had been so brief. His body was hardly cold, before the impatient army, grateful for his mild administration, or hopeful of its continuance from the prepossessions which they had already formed in favour of his son, turned their eyes towards Constantine, as the proper person to succeed to the vacant dignity: and though the young man, in sincerity, from modesty or affectation, referred the election of an emperor to the older and more experienced of those about him, his objections were overruled, and the acclamations of all saluted him as emperor[m]. "Thus their deliberate judgment," as we read it in the oration of Eumenius, "only pronounced the same decision which the favour of the soldiery had anticipated: as soon as you appeared among them, they, with a laudable preference of the public good, and setting aside your own private feelings, clothed you in the purple, notwithstanding your tears, notwithstanding your attempt, invincible Cæsar, to escape, as it is said, out of their hands, by spurring your horse to speed! . . . O happy Britain, happier than all lands, in having first set eyes upon the Cæsar Constantine!

[l] This fact is found in Richard of Cirencester, and it receives an apparent confirmation from the words of Eumenius, c. 7.

[m] Eutropius x. 1, 2. Anon. de Const. Chloro. Orosius, vii. 28. Euseb. Chron. Aurel. Vict. de Cæs. 40. Socrates Scholasticus says, that Constantius died the 25th of July, in the first year of the 271st Olympiad, Hist. Eccl. i. 2.

Well hath nature blessed thee with every advantage both of climate and of soil, for in thee is neither extreme severity of winter, nor excess of heat; and so great is the fertility of thy fields, that they suffice both for corn and wine; thy woods contain no noxious beasts; no venomed serpents creep upon thy soil; but gentle flocks of innumerable sheep, with udders full of milk, and backs thick with fleeces: and, to add to the delights of life, the days are long, and night is never wholly without some light; whilst thy level shores cast no shades, and the face of heaven and of the stars escapes from the prison of darkness; so that the sun, which with us seems to set, appears there only to go round thee. . . . Good heavens! whence comes it, that ever from some distant corner of the world new deities descend on earth to govern us, and to receive the worship of mankind!"

But the happiness of this consummation, in which the orator rejoices so eloquently, was still in suspense, notwithstanding the choice of the armies of the West, and a less prudent aspirant to imperial power, might still have failed to secure his object. A hasty assumption of the offered dignity might lead to an appeal to arms, a settlement as uncertain as the smiles or frowns of fortune are capricious. Constantine probably felt that this was his position, when he chose rather to mitigate the anger of Galerius by modesty and moderation, than to provoke it by arrogance. A messenger departed for Nicomedia, to inform Galerius of the wishes of the army to which Constantine had assented only from necessity: unable from the distance to consult the emperor, he had done his best by consenting, though reluctantly, in the impatient decision of his men: which he prayed Galerius to ratify. This mes-

sage produced the effect which had been foreseen. Galerius, incensed at what had happened, but unable to prevent or redress the insubordination of the soldiers of the West, was mollified by the apparent humility of Constantine, and returned an answer bestowing upon him the title of Cæsar, whilst he reserved the higher rank of Augustus for his favourite Severus.

In this manner, without the grace of friendship, yet free from the calamities of war, the Roman emperors continued to govern their respective provinces; which were already, by this separate mode of administration, preparing the way for the future dismemberment of the empire, and the formation of the states into which Europe is now divided. Six years passed away without the occurrence of any event which may arrest the pen of the historian of Britain. What then followed rather draws off attention from this island, than illustrates its history or its condition: yet it requires a passing notice, because institutions, which still exist, and preserve an imposing attitude in the social system, were then chiefly brought to maturity, and received the form which they have ever since maintained.

The year 310 saw the unusual number of six emperors at once ruling the same state, each unable to dispute the claims of his associates, yet entertaining animosity against them all. The infatuated Maximian, the ancient colleague of Diocletian, hearing that his son Maxentius had assumed the purple in Italy, started from his retirement, and again mixed in the politics of the day. Maxentius, supported by the fame of so great a name, maintained himself in Italy until the latter end of A.D. 312, when the Roman citizens, groaning under his oppression, appealed to Constantine

to relieve them from his tyranny[n]. This summons, so gratifying to an ambitious yet prudent prince, was not neglected by Constantine; he passed the Alps, as soon as the season admitted, and appeared on the plains of Italy with an army[o] composed of Gauls, Germans, and Britons, in number about forty thousand men, which he retained about him, after he had placed garrisons to the amount of nearly sixty thousand more, in the different cities and fortresses which he passed. In a short time, the army, thus reduced, encountered the host of Maxentius, which was three or four times more numerous. The other emperors, Maximin and Licinius, on whom the provinces of the East had devolved, looked with anxiety on a contest, which would remove one, and might remove both of their rivals. But we may believe that Constantine possessed an incalculable advantage over his opponent in the well-known affection of his troops, and zeal in the service of their leader. On the other hand, Maxentius could not count on the fidelity of his troops, or on the affections of the people, who had long heard of the favour which Constantine enjoyed among his subjects beyond the Alps. From whatever cause, the army of Maxentius was defeated; and by the death of their leader, Constantine was enabled to enter Rome in triumph. About the same time Maximin

[n] Yet one of the first acts of Maxentius, according to Eusebius, [Hist. Eccl. viii. 14.] was to relax the persecution of the Christians, which had been begun by Diocletian and Maximian in 303, and was still raging. It would not be difficult to shew, that some of the worst of the Roman emperors favoured the Christians, whilst some of the most virtuous persecuted them: but no argument can be drawn from this fact, either favourable or inimical to the religion, to its establishment, character, or doctrines.

[o] Zosimus, ii. 15.

was removed from the world, and thus the empire rested with Constantine and Licinius for a few short years, until the jealousy of empire impelling the latter to use any means, whether of fraud or force, that might free him from his colleague, he was baffled and defeated in all his attempts, and at last expiated with life his inability to continue faithful to his engagements.

The sovereignty of Europe was then again lodged in the hands of a single emperor, and this happened at a time when a new element was mingling in the formation of social life and manners, which required that the governor of such large dominions should no longer remain passive to its existence. We cannot believe that the Christian doctrines could have spread over the whole of Europe, without attracting the notice of the emperor and his court. It is equally difficult to conceive that a religion, which began among the humble classes of society, could have speedily numbered kings and princes among its converts. We may admit that the earlier tyrants of the family of the Cæsars conceived the thought of including Christ among the deities of the Roman empire; but we may with equal justice set aside the pious supposition of Eusebius[p], that the emperor Philip was in heart a Christian. It is an unhappy truth, that sovereigns and their courts are ever backward to listen to the pleadings of religion, or its lessons of piety; nor will it be taken as an atonement for their deafness, that from motives of prudence and good policy, they often shew favour to the cause from which indifference leads them to withhold the sanction of their name.

But when Constantine reigned as emperor in Gaul, his acute perception failed not to discover, that the

[p] Euseb. Hist. Eccl.

Christians were become formidable in numbers, and respectable from the station of some of their members. Need it be suggested, that during the persecution, to which they were exposed by the commands of Diocletian, he had opportunity of discerning virtues which called forth his admiration? The fortitude displayed by the Christians exceeded any thing which the pagans could conceive: he who worshipped Jupiter and a thousand minor deities, could not deny that the gods of almost all foreign superstitions were equally deserving of the adoration of mankind: but the Christian destroyed all other creeds, to put the faith of Christ alone in their empty shrines: and as the faith of Christ is more minutely and subtilely interwoven with all the feelings of the human heart, the effect of their action in enabling them to bear pain and torment, was a cause of reasonable astonishment to the pagans around them. This circumstance is likely to have produced its effect on the mind of Constantine, who would soon perceive how necessary, how wise, it would be to have regard to so large a portion of his subjects. Whilst his government was limited to Gaul and Britain, he had given no indication of the extraordinary step which he afterwards took. But when Galerius, in 311, had revoked the edict of persecution, first promulgated by Diocletian, the impetus given to the propagation of the Christian tenets seems to have rapidly accelerated the course of events. "When the storm of persecution ceased"—we again quote the words of Venerable Bede[q]—"the faithful followers of Christ came forth from the woods and deserts and hidden caves, where in the time of danger they had concealed themselves: they rebuilt the churches which had been

[q] Bed. Hist. Eccles. i. 8.

levelled to the ground, erected basilicas in honour of the holy martyrs, and every where hoisted their victorious ensigns. This peace remained in the churches of Christ, which were in Britain, until the time of the Arian heresy."

After the defeat and death of Maxentius, the emperor Constantine still further extended his favour towards those who bore the Christian name, but it was not till a much later period that he declared Christianity to be the religion of the empire; nor did he, until he lay on his death-bed, claim in his own person the administration of that rite, which was supposed to cleanse him from all his sins, and send him, in the original purity of man, an accepted applicant for admission into the heavenly kingdom. Yet, in spite of this fact, ecclesiastical hardihood has recorded, that the Divine power was put forth to alter or contravene the laws of nature, and to work miracles in favour of Constantine. Nazarius, who wrote nine years after the defeat of Maxentius[r], relates, that a host of divine warriors, clad in armour of incomparable brilliancy, and of surpassing beauty, descended from heaven to aid the cause of Constantine against his foe. Seventeen years later, Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea[s], records, that the emperor, in one of his marches, saw in the heavens a luminous cross, placed over the sun, and inscribed with the words, "BY THIS THOU SHALT CONQUER!" At this sight he and all his army were astonished; and could not comprehend the nature or meaning of the apparition. But in the ensuing night Christ appeared before him, and, displaying the same cross, directed that a similar one should be constructed,

[r] A.D. 321. Nazar. inter Paneg. Vett. x. 14, 15.

[s] Euseb. in Vita Con. i. 28, 29, 30.

under which, as a banner, his army should march against Maxentius. In confirmation of this story, Eusebius alleges the authority of Constantine himself, who, many years after, in the familiarity of conversation, informed him of this extraordinary occurrence, and asserted upon oath that it was true. But when the good bishop consigned to writing this romantic legend, the emperor, by whose word of mouth his veracity might have been ascertained, was already removed from the world, and it was no longer possible for a caviller to dispute so beautiful a story, told of so pious a prince, by a bishop of such learning and respectability[t].

It must, however, be inferred, either that the emperor Constantine wished to impose a falsehood on the world, or that his gradual conversion to Christianity was the effect solely of his prudential care of his own interests. Man is often unable to make an exact discrimination between the mixed motives of his actions. "In an age of religious fervour, the most artful statesmen are observed to feel some part of the enthusiasm which they inspire, and the most orthodox saints assume the dangerous privilege of defending the cause of truth, by the arms of deceit and falsehood[u]." A word spoken hypothetically by a prince, will be expanded when retailed by his courtiers; and the most

[t] It is hardly necessary to point out to the critical reader, that the miracles of Nazarius and of Eusebius can hardly both be true. It is not to be supposed, that the Almighty would make an unnecessary display of his power, in order to ensure the victory to Constantine,—a point which his Omnipotence could effect by simply directing the existing laws of nature. It may therefore be safely inferred, that both these miracles are false.

[u] Gibbon, ch. xx.

extraordinary narratives have, when traced to their source, been found to rest on a singularly small basis, not exceeding the usual laws and course of nature.

After the conquest of Italy, the first Christian emperor reigned with comparative ease twenty-six years over the vast dominions which owned him for their master. The vigour and security of his sceptre are attested by the long cessation from war between the Northern Britons of the Roman province and their restless neighbours of Caledonia: for those free tribes seldom heard that the continental dominions of Rome were assailed by her enemies, without rising in arms to expel the legions from the island, or harass them by incursions. Britain now enjoyed a calm of upwards of thirty years, and only occurs to our notice in the year 314, when Constantine summoned at Arles the first ecclesiastical synod which had been held by the public authority since the institution of the Christian religion. The object, for which this council met, was to compose the dissension which had arisen in Africa, and caused so much scandal and reproach to the church in that country, between the rival bishops Cæcilian and Majorinus. This dispute, probably from Donatus bishop of Casæ Nigræ, who took a leading part in it, has received the name of the Schism of the Donatists. After many vain attempts to reconcile the parties, and to heal the schism, a large council was summoned by order of the emperor to meet at Arles, a metropolitan city in the south of Gaul. To each of the bishops thus summoned was delivered a warrant from the emperor, requiring the civil authorities to provide them with all necessaries by the way, and at the stations where they should halt on their journey; but, as by far the greater part of them came from the

neighbouring provinces of Gaul, it is not likely that the public revenue was much straitened by the expenses of the synod. A letter is still extant[x] from Constantine, addressed to Chrestus, bishop of Syracuse, and it is probable that a similar missive was dispatched to the several ecclesiastics who were summoned to appear. A list of those who obeyed the summons has also been preserved[y]; by which it appears, that Britain sent emissaries to take their place among the other bishops and ecclesiastics, by whom the church was then governed. It may gratify the upholders of the true apostolical succession to find, that the distinction between the three orders of the clergy is prominent in this catalogue; but it reflects no favourable view of the intellect of the fourth century, that the name of exorcist, an officer whose duties are too well expressed by his title, occurs almost as often in that document as those of bishop, priest, or deacon.

It would be interesting to a native of Britain to read a more detailed account of the bishops which went from this island to attend the mandate of the emperor: but, besides that many errors may have crept into the catalogue before alluded to, its very meagreness renders it impossible to derive any information from it concerning the church of Britain at that early date.

The names of the bishops and their clergy, who came from Britain to attend the Synod of Arles, are these; "Eborius, bishop, from the city of York, in the province of Britain: Restitutus, bishop, from the city of London, in the province aforesaid: Adelfius, bishop, from the city of 'Colonia Londinensium:' then Sacerdos, the presbyter; Arminius, the deacon."

[x] Euseb. in Vita Const. x. 6.

[y] Labbei Concilia, tom. i. col. 1429.

Concerning the last of the three cities named in this list, there has long been a dispute among antiquarians: but, whether the colony of London, of Lincoln, Camalodunum, or Caerleon[r], be the true reading, it has been inferred, that there was in Britain a larger number of bishops than three; for it would be hardly probable, that all its prelates would leave it at the same time to attend a foreign council.

A few years after the synod of Arles, the Christian world was again thrown into confusion by the progress which the Arian heresy was making through all Europe. To meet the evil, the famous council of Nice was held in the year of our Lord 325, but we find nothing about Britain in the records of its proceedings which have come down to us. Eusebius only observes, that its canons were received every where in Gaul, Egypt, Spain, Africa, Libya, and Britain; and it has been inferred from those words, that bishops from Britain attended at the council.

The reign of Constantine was drawing to a close. He died in 332, leaving his vast empire to his three sons, Constantine II. Constantius, and Constans. Of the character of this great man, the best account has perhaps been given by Eutropius[s]. "He was a man in the beginning of his reign worthy of comparison with the best of princes, but in the latter part of it not

[r] The text of the MSS. is Colonia Londinensis, supposed to be an error, for the city of London occurs second on the list. It is not likely that there were two bishops from that city, unless it be argued, that the dioceses of those times were beyond all comparison smaller than those which exist at present. Spelman and Selden read Camalodunum; Dr. Henry, Gale, and Bingham propose Colonia Lindum, or Lincoln. Usher reads Colchester, and Stillingfleet gives the preference to Colonia Leg. ii. or Caerleon upon Usk.

[s] Eutropius, x. 7.

superior to ordinary ones. He possessed innumerable excellencies, both of mind and body: eager to obtain military glory, and much favoured in his wars by fortune, he equalled his good fortune by his activity; for, when the civil wars were ended, he twice overthrew the Gauls, and having made peace with them, impressed their minds with the lasting memory of his kindness. He was devoted to the peaceful arts and liberal studies, and was desirous of obtaining the just love of his subjects, which he indeed secured by his bounty and gentleness. Singular in his behaviour towards some of his friends, he was most bountiful towards the others, and never let slip an opportunity of serving them." The whole empire acquired, by his long and able government of thirty-two years, a stability which remained in his own family until the death of Julian, surnamed the Apostate, a period of nearly seventy years since the fortunes of his house rose with Constantius, when he recovered Britain from Allectus[b].

[b] "As Constantine made some alterations in the plan of the Roman empire, it may not be amiss here briefly to observe in what manner Britain was governed under him and his successors. He appointed four præfects of the Prætorium, viz. in the East, Illyricum, Italy, and Gaul, and two masters of the soldiers, one of the infantry, the other of the cavalry in the West, whom he called Præsentiales.

"The civil government of Britain was in the hands of the præfect of the prætorium in Gaul, under whom was the vicar of Britain, who supplied his place, and was distinguished with the title of *Spectabilis*, [Respectable, AMMIAN. MARC. xxi. 13.] He had under him, according to the number of the provinces, two consular officers and three presidents, who determined civil and criminal causes.

"The command in military matters was lodged with the master of the infantry of the West, under whom were the *Comes Britanniarum*, the *Comes littoris Saxonici* throughout Britain, the *Dux Britanniarum;* all styled *Spectabilis* [Respectable].

"The *Comes Britanniarum* seems to have commanded in the

interior parts of the island, with seven numeri of foot, and nine vexillations of horse.

"The *Comes littoris Saxonici*, who was to defend the coast against the Saxons, and is called by Ammianus, *Comes tractus maritimi*, had for the defence of the sea-coast seven numeri of foot, two vexillations of horse, the second legion, and one cohort.

"The *Dux Britanniarum*, who guarded the frontiers against the barbarians, had the command of 37 garrisons, in which were stationed 14,000 foot, and 900 horse. So that in that age, if Pancirolus be right in his calculations, Britain must have statedly maintained 99,000 foot, and 1700 horse.

"Besides these, the *Comes Sacrarum largitionum*, who took care of the emperor's donatives and largesses, had under him in Britain *rationalis summarum Britanniæ*, an accountant-general for Britain; *Præpositus thesaurorum Augustensium*, a president of the imperial treasury in Britain, and a procurator Gynæcii, president of the wardrobe in Britain, in which the emperor's and soldiers' clothes were woven. The count had also *Comes rerum privatarum*, private accomptant for his own revenues in Britain; not to mention the *Procurator ludi Gladiatorii*, or master of all the fencing-schools in Britain, mentioned in an ancient inscription; and other officers of inferior rank."

The *Notitia imperii* &c. a most valuable relic of antiquity, is the principal source from which our information is obtained concerning the distribution and civil government of the provinces in the Roman empire.

In the Theodosian Code [xi. 7, 2.] is a rescript of the emperor Constantine, dated Nov. 20, 319, and addressed to Pacatian, Vicar, or, as we might more appropriately render it, Viceroy, of Britain. It appears from this and other facts, as well as from the probability of the case, that Britain was governed according to the same system which prevailed elsewhere: the extract above quoted will probably be sufficient for the general reader; more especially as it would be unsafe to follow modern writers, and perhaps Pancirolus also, in all the particulars with which they have endeavoured to fill out the general outline. That learned and industrious antiquary, Richard Gough, seems to have entertained the same sentiments, when he attached the following note to the extract from Camden above quoted.

"Camden seems to have taken his accounts chiefly from the Notitia, and Pancirolus's Annotations on it. Burton (Anton. p. 24.) says, Pancirolus has followed Camden; not considering that Panci-

rolus was the first writer, and is even quoted by Camden himself. In the Notitia Imperii Occidentalis under the proconsul of Africa are placed six Vicarii, one of whom is the Vicarius Britanniarum. Socrates uses the word Βικαριος, and Ammianus Marcellinus *Vicarius*, for the principal officer in Britain. Martinus, agens [*f.* regens] illas provincias pro præfecto," and afterwards the same person is called Vicarius, xiv. 5. as is Alypius, xxix. 2. In the same chapter of the Notitia I find several other principal officers mentioned in Britain. Thus among the *comites* we have *comes Britanniarum, comes littoris Saxonici, per Britannias.* In another place, *comes Britanniæ*, which is probably the same with *comes Britanniarum;* for the singular and plural of this, as well as some other names of places, were used promiscuously by the Romans. Among the dukes we have *dux Britanniæ*, and *Britanniarum.* Among the *consulares*, per *Britannias duo, maximæ Cæsariensis et Valentiæ:* among the *præsides, per Britannias tres, Britanniæ et Flaviæ Cæsariensis.* There is a passage in Aurelius Victor, which intimates that some alteration was made in the form of government by Constantine: " Officia publica et Palatina, *primæ*, Britanniæ secundæ, necnon militum in eam formam statuisse Hadrianum quæ paucis per Constantium immutatis hodie perseverat." Dodwell observes out of Lactantius, de morte perseq., that Diocletian introduced a new disposition, which plainly occasioned the four *præfecti prætorio*, answering to the two emperors and two Cæsars, and respectively next to them in dignity. There seems to have been no proprætor or imperial legate here after Gordian, and during the several usurpations the tyrants had their own *præfectus prætorio.* Not very long after this a crowd of new officers was introduced, whose names have a barbarous sound. Horsley, 71, 72. comp. with 480." GOUGH'S CAMDEN, vol. i. p. civ.

CHAP. XVIII.

SONS OF CONSTANTINE THE GREAT, CONSTANTINE II, CONSTANS, AND CONSTANTIUS—COUNCILS OF NICE AND SARDICA—REBELLION AND DEFEAT OF MAGNENTIUS A BRITON—PAULUS CATENA IN BRITAIN—JULIAN IN GAUL—LUPICINUS.

THE year 337 is marked by the death of Constantine, and the accession of his three sons, Constantine II, Constantius, and Constans, to the throne of the empire. The sons of so great a monarch seldom enjoy that stable prosperity which might be thought to have resulted from the labours and successes of the deceased. When all enemies have been vanquished in the field, and nothing remains to dispute their possession of all that this earth can furnish, the real trials of youthful sovereigns may be said to begin. Flattery assails them from their courtiers, and often the headstrong passions of their own unrestrained nature hurry them, of their own accord, into evils more fatal than any which the open hostility of rivals can produce. Ambition to reign alone has too often severed the affections of brothers: and Constantine, the eldest of the three emperors, soon finding that the portion of their father's dominions, which fell to his share, Gaul, Britain, Spain, and part of Germany, was too little to satisfy him, took up arms to expel his brothers from their portions of the empire. A hasty invasion of the

dominions of his brother Constans ended in his being defeated, and slain near Aquileia, in the early part of the year 340.

Constans, without consulting his surviving brother, annexed the provinces of Constantine to his own dominions: and thereby sowed the seeds of a discord between himself and Constantius, which, before the lapse of many years, was cut short by his own murder[a].

The reign of Constantius and Constans is celebrated as favourable to the Christians, who at length, safe from persecution, emerging from the subordinate importance which they had before enjoyed in the empire, already begin to threaten the pagans with reprisals. "Strip off, strip off fearlessly, most religious emperors, the ornaments of the temples," exclaims Firmicus, in the impatient zeal of a convert—for Firmicus once had been a heathen himself—"Melt down their gold, or coin it into money. Since the fall of the temples, you have made great advancement in the meritorious service of the Almighty: you have conquered your enemies and have enlarged your empire, and, as if to shed a brighter ray upon your virtues, you despised the ordinary course of the seasons, measuring with your oars the swollen and raging waves of the ocean,—an exploit which had never been achieved before! The billows of that almost unknown sea trembled, and the Briton quailed at the unexpected appearance of his emperor[b]."

Of the expedition which Constans made to Britain, no accounts have reached us; and it is safe to infer, that where a triumph over the waves of a narrow sea, is described in such terms of praise, little else occurred

[a] Constans was slain in A. D. 350.

[b] Jul. F. Mater. De err. p. 463.

to employ the pen of the historian. Nor will the merit of the exploit of Constans be much enhanced in the mind of the modern Briton, by the description which the ancient rhetorician gives of the dangers attending on the navigation of our northern seas. "It is not becoming," says Libanius[c], "to pass over in silence the expedition into the island Britain, because the island is unknown to many, . . . in order that all may learn that the emperor [Constans] sought it out, though beyond the known world. . . . Herodotus indeed . . . openly contends that this far-famed ocean does not exist. . . . And even they who believe such an ocean somewhere to exist, feel dizzy at the name thereof. Yet so far was the emperor from a feeling of this kind, that had he not made himself acquainted with it, drawn down his ship, proceeded on his passage, and moored in the harbours of Britain, he would have thought he had omitted that which more especially became him. Moreover, there is a report, supported by eye-witnesses, that there is greater danger for a round-built ship to be committed to that sea, than to stand the shock of a naval battle elsewhere: such vehement tempests roll the waves to heaven, and violent winds, uplifting, carry them to the illimitable ocean. But that which is most tremendous is, that, when the helmsman has opposed his skill to every thing else, the sea retreats on a sudden, and the bark, hitherto aloft upon the waves, is discovered lying on the bare sand; and should it quickly flow again, it carries off the vessel. And now again must the mariners labour; for if it delay its flowing, the bark settles down by

[c] Libanius, Paneg. Const. et Const. dict. A.D. 349. See also Ambros. Hexam. iii. 3.

degrees, the sand yielding to its weight. The emperor considered none of these matters, but knowing them perfectly, made no delay: . . . he did not linger on the beach, . . . neither did he previously intimate or proclaim his expeditions to the cities there. . . . Having embarked an hundred men, as it is said, and loosing his cables, he cut through the ocean. . . . Nor indeed, as this access to the island was so tranquil, did the return thence fall out otherwise. . . . But had the island revolted, and its inhabitants been rebellious, and the province been circumscribed; had this news arrived, and he, irritated at such intelligence, had cast the die for sailing, then the boldness of his design could not have been ascribed to the love of glory, for the necessity consequent on such revolt would have taken away the greater part of its fame: but now matters being arranged in Britain, and no fear arising from the land, he began to be delighted with the wonders of the ocean."

Whatever may have been the motive or the result of the emperor's journey to Britain, the fame of it has been set aside in favour of the more engrossing religious disturbances which already raged throughout Europe. The Council of Nice had pronounced a decisive sentence in favour of the Athanasian doctrines: and Constans supported the tenets then propounded: but his brother Constantius was an Arian; and the quarrels which arose from this difference of opinion in speculative theology, by its practical effects, brought merited obloquy on the whole of Christianity.

The Council of Sardica, held in A.D. 347, failed to put an end to these disputes between the brothers and their adherents. Three hundred bishops assembled

there from various countries, and amongst them were some from Britain[e]; but the Eastern prelates declined to attend, and, as the Synod was thus considered to lose its œcumenical or general character, the controversy was as far as ever from being satisfactorily decided.

Three years after the Council of Sardica, whilst Constantius was deeply engaged, and not with as much success as he could have wished, in a war with Persia, his brother Constans fell a victim to one of those domestic treasons, which so frequently terminated the reign and the life of a Roman emperor.

Magnentius[f] was by birth a Briton, and had attained the rank of Count in the service of Constans. He seems to have been a man of an ambitious and daring character, and with such an one nothing but an opportunity is wanting. The absence of Constantius in the remote East, from which, on account of the difficulties of the Persian war[g], he might never return, is said to have suggested to Magnentius the possibility of his reigning alone over the Roman world. A conspiracy

[e] Athan. con. Apion.

[f] Zonaras, xiii. 6. "Whence this Magnentius had the title of Taporus on an ancient stone not long since dug up at Rome, I leave to the enquiry of others. For these are the lines, speaking of the obelisk erected in the Circus at Rome.

Interea Taporo *Romam vastante tyranno*
Augusti jacuit donum, studiumque locandi.
But while Taporus tyrant ravaged Rome,
Augustus' gift neglected lay o'erthrown."

GOUGH'S CAMDEN, vol. i. p. civ.

But, as Gough justly remarks, the name Taporus has been supplied by the critics, the original being only TA . . RO. Gruter, clxxxvi. 3. Amm. Marc. xvii. 4.

[g] Ibid. Aurel. Victor.

was formed with his fellow-officers: Constans was surprised, and slain without difficulty, and Magnentius became at once the master of all the Western empire. But his reign was of short duration. Constantius, not unwilling perhaps to escape from the disasters of the Persian war, suspended the prosecution of his designs against the public enemy, until he should have taken vengeance on the murderer of his brother. The armies of the East and West three times met in deadly conflict, and the victory thrice successively rested with Constantius. The bold adventurer, seeing that his hope of reigning was ended, killed himself at Lyons, and Constantius, in A.D. 353, saw himself sole monarch of the same extensive sovereignty, which, nearly fifty years before, had devolved on his father Constantine.

The battle of Mursa not only destroyed the hopes of Magnentius, but entailed severe suffering on the provinces which had espoused his cause. Britain, the birthplace of that adventurer, had probably exceeded the bounds of ordinary discretion in supporting his interests: she at all events, if we may believe the historian Ammianus Marcellinus[h], felt most severely the effects of his defeat, and of the indignation of the conqueror.

"Among the flatterers of Constantius was one Paulus, an eminent notary, born in Spain, a man of a deceitful character, and singularly astute and sagacious in discovering secret conspiracies. This man was now sent into Britain to take proceedings against those who had espoused the part of Magnentius. Finding that his intended victims were powerless against him, he took upon himself to exceed his commission, and dealt terror around him by the severe

[h] Ammian. Marcell. xiv. 5.

measures which he used: men of gentle birth were thrown into prison, and some of them were even handcuffed, though the accusations which were brought against them were of a fictitious nature, totally opposite to the truth. These unjust proceedings cast a blot upon the reign of Constantius, which cannot be wiped out. The officer commanding at this time in Britain was one Martin[1], who deeply felt the sufferings to which the innocent inhabitants were subjected, and he did not cease to intercede in their behalf, and entreat that at least those who were free from blame might be spared. Not succeeding in obtaining his request, he threatened that he would leave the island, hoping that the fear of his fulfilling this threat might deter the harsh inquisitor from bringing into peril those who were naturally averse from creating disturbances, and would willingly, if permitted, remain in tranquillity. Paul thought that this conduct of Martin tended to bring his services into disrespect, and began to put into action all that subtilty of talent, which had gained for him the name of Catena or "The Chain," to involve the Vicar himself in the same disasters, from which he was endeavouring to save his people. In pursuance of this object he urged, that the Vicar, together with certain tribunes and others, should be carried in chains to the court

[1] History informs us, that about this time Gratianus, surnamed Funarius, on account of his strength in retaining a rope against the united strength of five men, held a superior command in Britain, [*præfuit rei castrensi,*] but it is impossible to say in what relation he stood to Martin; as the notices of British events are at this period so scanty. Gratian is known to us also, as father of the emperor Valentinian. He retired from his command into private life, and was afterwards heavily fined by Constantius on a charge of having hospitably received Magnentius when marching towards Italy. [Amm. Marc. xxx. 7.]

of the emperor. Martin, alarmed at the impending danger, watching his opportunity, rushed with his drawn sword on Paul, but his arm faltered, and he failed in his stroke, upon which he turned round, and plunged the sword in his own bosom. Thus fell an honest and upright man, who at all events delayed the infliction of injustice on the innocent people whom he governed, though he was unable ultimately to save them from the unjust fate, to which the abused authority of the emperor consigned them. Paul returned to court steeped in British blood, and dragging with him a multitude of miserable victims loaded with chains, whose looks depicted the hopelessness of their destiny. Some of these suffered horrid tortures at the hands of the executioners: others were proscribed and exiled, and others again had their heads smitten from their bodies on the scaffold."

By these severities ample vengeance was taken on the Britons, for espousing the cause of their countryman Magnentius; but the atrocious agent of this bloody work, by one of those acts of retribution, which the Providence of this world frequently displays, did not go down in peace to the grave. He was burnt alive in the reign of Julian, and so suffered as dreadful a fate, as that which he had inflicted on so many others.

Meanwhile, the province of Britain was beginning to smart under a dispensation of Providence, which at last not only subverted its government, but led the way to the slaughter, exile, or servitude, of all its ancient race of inhabitants, together with the Romans, who for generations had been settled amongst them. This scourge, which for many years grievously afflicted Britain, arose from the appearance of new tribes, or new combinations of tribes, in the north of the island,

of whose origin history has left us but faint traces. The persevering courage of the Caledonians had maintained the independence of their barren land down as late as the reign of Constantius. From an expression used by the panegyrist Eumenius[k], in the reign of Constantius Chlorus, grandfather of the existing emperor, it would seem, that the name of Picts was given to the Caledonians, as well as to other tribes of North Britain. Notwithstanding that such etymologies are in many instances fanciful, and not to be relied on, yet it is not improbable that the Romans attached the idea of painted men to this appellation. Whatever may have been its origin, the term first occurs in the government of Constantius Chlorus; and in the reign of his grandson, we first find that fatal union of Picts and Scots, which spread havoc and dismay from one end of the island to the other.

Of the origin and country of the Scots, we know no more than of the Picts: whilst some writers represent them as a native British tribe, which increased in power and occupation of territory until they surpassed their neighbours; others have assigned Ireland as the place of their first residence, from which, it is said, they issued, and gradually took possession of Scotland and of the isles. On the other hands, the Picts are said to have come from Scythia, by which, if any thing at all is meant, we must understand the Scandinavian countries, situated in the north of Europe. But it would be a task of too great daring to enter at present upon so wide a field of discussion; and where the conclusions arrived at have been so conflicting, it

[k] Paneg. Const. Aug. dict. A.D. 310, c. 5, 6. Caledonum aliorumque Pictorum.

is safe to limit our attention to that part of the consideration, which concerns the present subject[l].

All writers, then, are agreed, that soon after the empire was restored to tranquillity, by the defeat and death of Magnentius, the combined forces of the Picts and Scots began to ravage the northern parts of the Roman territories in Britain, and to spread terror over the provinces already spent with the succession of former calamities[m].

The distressed inhabitants addressed themselves to Gaul for assistance. That large and important country was, however, in almost as bad a position as Britain. The Alemanni were overrunning it in large numbers, and though checked by the abilities of the great Julian, whom Constantius had declared his colleague in the empire, and to whose care he had committed Gaul, yet the enemy still found him sufficient occupation, and he was unable to sail in his own person to the relief of Britain.

But the danger to which so important a province of the empire was exposed, forced itself upon the attention of Julian. Britain, though less favoured by nature in the extraordinary and rapid growth of plants for which the regions of the torrid zone are remarkable, yet possesses a steady power of useful vegetation, which must render her soil always of value for supplying the simple and common necessaries of life. Its extraordinary agricultural resources were already practically known to Julian. As soon as his military successes in Gaul procured him the first interval of peace, he

[l] Those who desire to investigate this subject more fully, will do well to consult Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, &c. chap. xxv. and the authors there cited.

[m] Ammian. Marc. xx. 1.

turned his thoughts to the restoration of the ruined cities. It was also incumbent upon him to provide his subjects with food as well as houses. "The tillage of the provinces of Gaul had been interrupted by the calamities of war; but the scanty harvests of the continent were supplied, by his paternal care, from the plenty of the adjacent island. Six hundred large barks, framed in the forest of the Ardennes, made several voyages to the coast of Britain; and returning from thence laden with corn, sailed up the Rhine, and distributed their cargoes to the several towns and fortresses along the banks of the river[n]."

To assist the Britons against their cruel foes, was worthy the arms of Julian, but in the multitude of cares which surrounded him, he feared to leave Gaul without a governor, whilst the Alemanni still breathed nothing but blood and slaughter. Julian therefore came to the determination of sending one of his principal officers to aid the Britons, and made choice of Lupicinus, who was at that time camp-marshal[o], a brave and experienced officer, though in his private character he is said to have been open to some of those accusations of meanness or cupidity which often sully the virtues of public men. Lupicinus, in discharge of the duties entrusted to him,

[n] "We may credit Julian himself," says Gibbon, chap. xix. "Orat. ad S. P. Q. Atheniensem, p. 280, who gives a very particular account of the transaction. Zosimus adds two hundred vessels more, l. iii. p. 145. If we compute the 600 corn-ships of Julian at only 70 tons each, they were capable of exporting 120,000 quarters, (see Arbuthnot's Weights and Measures, p. 237,) and the country, which could bear so large an exportation, must already have attained an improved state of agriculture."

[o] Magister armorum.

marched at the head of some light auxiliary troops, to which were added some companies of the Heruli, Mæsians, and Batavians, to Boulogne, where he took ship, though it was the depth of winter, for Britain. Landing, after a favourable voyage, at Richborough, he proceeded to London, there to take the measures which should be necessary, and to come to action, as opportunity should serve, with the army of the enemy.

But the exploits of Lupicinus were probably limited to the defeat of the Picts and Scots: for of the transactions consequent upon his arrival historians are silent, and our attention is called off from the contests of blood and of the sword, to other scenes, which, under the name of peace, were of hardly a more peaceful nature. For bitter beyond description were the disputes, and tumultuary beyond the power of the present age to conceive were the meetings of religious sects, which, under the appellation of Councils of the Church, mark the reign of the second Constantius.

CHAP. XIX.

CONSTANTIUS—RELIGIOUS DISPUTES—SYNOD OF RIMINI—BRITISH BISHOPS—JULIAN—JOVIAN—VALENTINIAN—PICTS AND SCOTS—BRITAIN SAVED BY THEODOSIUS.

More than forty years had passed since the Christians were persecuted by Diocletian. When the bloody decree was recalled, "all Christ's young disciples" in Britain,—we quote the words of Gildas, who lived 200 years later,—"after so long and wintry a night, began to behold the genial light of Heaven. They rebuilt the churches which had been levelled to the ground: they founded, erected, and finished temples in honour of the holy Martyrs, and every where shewed the insignia of victory: festivals were celebrated, and sacraments received with clean hearts and lips, and all the Church's sons rejoiced in the fostering bosom of their mother."

But the reign of Constantius introduced into Britain the seeds of religious discord. History records too many instances of the influence which Sovereigns exercise upon the faith of their subjects. The father of Constantius, Constantine the Great, is undoubtedly responsible for having communicated to Christianity that secular character, which, during succeeding centuries, gave the Church so much sway over the temporal

affairs of the world, as totally for a time to submerge the spiritual simplicity of its original. And now the son of Constantine was almost on the point of destroying one of the doctrines of Christianity which his father would have held most sacred. And, surprising as is the fact, a majority of his subjects, in various parts of the empire, occasionally supported the heterodox principles of the emperor. It has been said, that it would be happy for the world, if all its kings were philosophers, or all philosophers were kings. But the maxim has not been verified in the case of Christian philosophy; for it would be well for mankind if none of their governors had ever interfered in matters of religion, or attempted to enforce on their subjects the tenets which belong to religious controversy.

The peace of the empire was disturbed by the conflicts between Arius and Athanasius. Constantius was an Arian, and, though our ecclesiastical writers were too courtly to charge on the emperor all the evils which his Arian bias occasioned, yet they spare no abuse in describing the pestilential nature of the doctrines. "The holy union," continues Gildas, "between Christ the Head and the members of His Church, was interrupted by the Arian treason, which, fatal as a serpent, and vomiting its poison from beyond the sea, caused deadly dissension between brothers inhabiting the same house, and thus, as if a road were made across the sea, like wild beasts of all descriptions, and darting the poison of every heresy from their jaws, they inflicted dreadful wounds upon their country, which is ever desirous to hear something new, and remains constant long to nothing."

The divinity of Christ, which was the point so zealously defended by the Athanasians, and assailed

by the Arians, laboured under a serious disadvantage in the known hostility of the emperor; and many a synod was held for the purpose of settling this knotty doctrine. In the eastern provinces, the tenets of the Court were supported by a majority of the Bishops. In the year 360, Constantius removed the scene of action to the West, and convoked a synod at Rimini, on the coast of the Adriatic.

Of four hundred Bishops who there assembled, eighty only held the opinions of Arius, and the western empire seemed to maintain its orthodoxy, in spite of the influence and solicitations of the Court. Yet the interference of the public authority was sufficient, one would have thought, to conquer the stubbornness of the meeting, when the arbitrary nature of the imperial government is duly weighed. Taurus, the prefect, was entrusted by Constantius with the task of convening the Bishops, and conducting the operations of the Council. His powers were specific and significant: he was ordered to let none of them depart, until they should have agreed on a formulary of faith, and the consulship was promised to him as the reward of his success. Emissaries were dispatched in all directions, the Council was speedily convoked, and provision was ordered to be furnished at the public expense to the Prelates who attended. "But this," says the ecclesiastical historian, Sulpicius Severus, "seemed unbecoming to the Bishops of Aquitaine, Gaul, and Britain, and they chose rather to live at their own charge, than at the expense of the Exchequer. Three only of the British Bishops, who were in needy circumstances, made use of the public provision; for, though the other Bishops offered to make a subscription for them, they

thought it more decent to be indebted to the public purse, than to be a burden upon individuals[a]."

The proceedings of the Council were protracted to an unusual length; and finally, the arguments of the Court-party, backed by the out-door support by which the emperor's instructions were sought to be enforced, prevailed to a certain extent over the orthodoxy of the majority. A semi-arian Creed was subscribed to, wherein the word expressing the consubstantial nature of the Son, which had hitherto been the supposed test of the true faith, was omitted, and the Bishops were allowed to depart to their respective homes. Constantius died the next year, and Julian, who despised alike the followers of Arius and Athanasius, succeeded to the empty throne.

During the short reign of this emperor, little is recorded of what passed in Britain. Palladius was displaced from the office[b] which he had held in the island, for some suspicion of having calumniated Julian's brother Gallus; and Alypius, another officer, who had governed Britain as pro-prefect and vicar[c], was sent to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. The mission of Lupicinus belongs to the time when Julian held the subordinate rank of Cæsar[d].

In the reign of Jovian, who followed Julian in the empire[e], the tranquillity of Britain was fearfully disturbed by the invasions of the northern barbarians. "At this time," says Ammianus[f], "the Picts, Saxons, Scots, and Attacots, vexed the Britons by unceasing

[a] Sulp. Sev. Hist. Eccles. ii. 55.

[b] Magister officiorum, Amm. Marc. xxii. 3.

[c] Ibid. xxix. 1. [d] See page 311. [e] From A.D. 363 to 364. [f] Amm. Marc. xxvi. 4.

calamities." Of the four tribes which thus combined to work destruction on the Romanized Britons, three have already occurred to notice as having for many years harassed the coasts of the island. But the fourth of these tribes now appears for the first time, and the only information which we possess about them is derived from the historian Ammianus Marcellinus, and the ecclesiastical writer St. Jerome. "Why need I speak of other nations?" says this Father; "for, when I was a young man, I saw in Gaul some Attacots, who are a British tribe, eat human flesh. This people, when they find herds of swine or cattle in the woods, cut off the buttocks and breasts of the men and women who attend them, and esteem these as the greatest delicacies!" In contrast with such horrid feasts, the loose and promiscuous intercourse which the same writer ascribes to the Scots, as taking place of the marriage-rite, is passed over by the reader as hardly worthy of his notice! "If in the neighbourhood of the commercial and literary town of Glasgow, a race of cannibals has really existed, we may contemplate, in the period of the Scottish history, the opposite extremes of savage and civilized life[g]."

In the midst of the ravages, which these barbarians wrought in Britain, Valentinian succeeded to the throne of the Roman empire, and thirty days after his assumption of the purple[h], he associated his brother Valens in the sovereignty of dominions which were too extensive for an individual to govern, or to control alone.

The talents of the new emperor, who reserved for himself the administration of the western provinces, were far above the average of his times: but his habit of turning a deaf ear to the complaints and grievances

[g] Gibbon, chap. xxv. [h] On the 28th of March, A. D. 364.

of his subjects, soon involved him in evils that might have been foreseen and prevented. The disturbances occasioned in Britain by the invasions of the Picts and Scots, assailed the tranquillity of the emperor from the North, and Africa in the South rung with alarms that shook the throne of the new sovereign from its basis. Illyricum too was agitated by convulsions[i], and the whole empire heaved and swayed under the effects of one of those moral earthquakes, which often are the forerunners of approaching dissolution.

Valentinian had left the city of Amiens, and was making the best of his way to Treves[k], when he was astounded by the news that Britain was suddenly reduced to the greatest extremities by a general combination of the barbarians; that Nectaridus, count of the sea-coast, was slain, and duke Fullofaudes surprised and cut off by an ambuscade of the enemy. Alarmed at this intelligence, the emperor sent Severus, at that time steward of the household, or, as his title ran, "Count of the Domestics," to settle matters in Britain, if an opportunity should present itself. But he soon after recalled him, and substituted in his place Jovinus[l]. The new emissary made all haste to cross over into his government, and sent on Provertuides in advance, to petition for a considerable body of troops to be ready on his arrival. This indeed was a demand which the necessity of the case rendered imperative.

In the mean time, the state of things in Britain grew worse and worse: and the reports which reached the

[i] Ammian. Marc. xxx. 9.

[k] A. D. 368. Ammianus Marcellinus, xxvii. 8, 9.

[l] Valentinian also sent over Fraomar, king of a German tribe, with a fine body of men, to aid the Britons, but the date of this event is uncertain. See Am. Mar. xxix. 4.

emperor's ears were so alarming, that it became necessary to take the most decisive steps, if he wished to retain Britain under his sovereignty. In this emergency, Valentinian wisely determined to send over the greatest man in his dominions, the celebrated Theodosius, father of a future emperor, to check the invaders, and to restore tranquillity. The signal services of Theodosius pointed him out as a proper general: a stout army of legionaries and cohorts was speedily assembled, and they were soon ready to depart, with every confidence of success.

We follow up the narrative of his expedition in the words of Ammianus:

"As I have before endeavoured," says this historian [m], "to describe the ebb and flow of the ocean, and the geographical position of Britain, I consider it superfluous in this place to travel over the same ground again, as Ulysses in Homer,

What so tedious as a twice-told tale?

Suffice it to say, that at this time the Picts were divided into two nations, the Dicalidons, and the Vecturions: these, together with a warlike tribe, called the Attacotts, and the Scots, roamed about and plundered the whole country. At the same time, the coasts of Gaul were ravaged by their neighbours, the Franks and Saxons, who invaded both by sea and land, burnt and destroyed every thing, and murdered their prisoners in cold blood.

"It was to check these evils, if Fortune would so far be favourable as to allow him an opportunity of doing so, that this great general visited so remote a part of the world; and when he arrived at Bononia

[m] In a part of his work which is now lost.

[Boulogne], he embarked on the sea which separates it from the opposite land, and which sometimes swells into the most dreadful waves, and presently after smooths down into a tranquil surface, over which vessels may sail in safety. Theodosius had an easy passage across the sea to Rutupiæ [Richborough], which is a quiet port on the opposite coast. Here was the rendezvous of his troops, consisting of the Batavians and Heruli, the Jovii and the Victores, and from thence, trusting to numbers, he directed his march towards London, an ancient town, called of late years Augusta. When he arrived there, he divided his men into several bodies, and fell upon the straggling troops of the enemy, whilst they were out plundering, and encumbered by the load of their booty. He speedily routed those who were carrying off the prisoners and cattle, and rescued the property, which had been taken from the wretched inhabitants. After restoring the whole to its owners, except a small part, which was reserved for his soldiers after their fatigue, he entered with triumph into the city, which a short time before had been plunged in the greatest distress: but was now suddenly recalled to life, by the salvation which had so unexpectedly appeared.

"Here he was tempted by his success to look forward to greater achievements, but cool reflection suggested safe counsels, and he felt doubtful of the result, for the evidence both of prisoners and deserters convinced him that such a rabble, consisting of men of different races, and liable to such bursts of ferocity, could be kept down only by secret stratagems, and sudden excursions. Finally, therefore, he issued a proclamation, offering amnesty to all deserters, and such others as were roaming at large throughout the

country. On this promise, a great number returned to their duty: and Theodosius, encouraged by this result, though still anxious about the state of things, requested that one Civilis should be sent out to govern Britain as pro-præfect, a man of an active intellect, but of the highest sense of honour and justice; and with him Dulcitius, a warlike and experienced commander.

"Such was the course of events at that time in Britain[n]."

"After a short interval of repose, during which he received the reinforcements which he expected, Theodosius left London, at the head of a brave and well-selected army, and by his successes on every side restored the fortunes of the defeated and dispirited Britons: he every where anticipated the enemy in occupying the most important points, and gave no orders to the common soldiers, which he was not himself the first to execute. In this way, discharging the duties both of an able general and brave soldier, he routed the various tribes, whose insolence, prompted by security, had led them to attack the Romans, and restored all the cities and fortresses, which, though they suffered severely from their manifold losses, had been originally well contrived for maintaining a lasting peace.

"In the course of these events, an affair of a serious nature transpired, which would have led to most disastrous consequences, if it had not been fortunately stifled in its beginning. A certain Valentine[o],

[n] Ammian. Marcel. xxvii. 8.

[o] This Valentine is called Valentinian by Zosimus, [iv. 12.] Jornandes, [de Reg. s. 8.] and the Latin text of the Chronicle of Eusebius, [sub Gratiani an. 7.] There cannot be a doubt of their

of Valeria in Pannonia, a man of a proud spirit, and brother to the wife of Maximin, that mischievous Vicar, who was afterwards præfect, being driven from his country on account of a serious crime, was living in exile in Britain; and, unable to endure inactivity, was continually bestirring himself, like some noxious animal, to raise disturbances, directed principally against Theodosius, the only person whom he thought able to resist his diabolical intentions. He formed his plans partly in private and partly in public, and as his ambitious views grew daily, he tried his arts among the soldiers, and those who were exiled from their country, offering them tempting rewards for their co-operation. And now they were not far from putting their designs in execution; but Theodosius, having been informed of every thing, and being now prepared to vindicate the cause of justice, handed over Valentine, with a few of his most intimate associates, into the hands of Dulcitius for punishment: but his keen military experience, in which he excelled all the others, leading him to form a ready decision what measures were likely to be most beneficial for the future, he forbade too minute enquiry to be made into the conspiracy, lest fear should be spread among the multitude, and so the former disturbances of the province might be revived.

"The conspiracy of Valentinian thus checked, Theodosius now turned his attention to correct many evils which required redress: all danger was entirely removed, and it appeared that his usual good fortune still accompanied all his proceedings. He rebuilt the cities and garrison-fortresses, as we have said, and

identity, though the Chronicle places the event in the seventh year of Gratian's reign, which is too late by four years.

secured the frontiers with guards and lines of forts; and so the Roman province, which had a little before been wholly in the possession of the enemy, was so completely restored to its former state, that the lawful authority of its governor was perfectly reestablished, and it assumed the name of Valentia, in honour of the emperor, under whose administration such a successful accomplishment had been attained[p]."

[p] Ibid. xxviii. 3. The geographical limits of the provinces into which Britain was divided under the Romans, have always puzzled antiquarians. The names of Britannia Prima, Britannia Secunda, Flavia, Maxima, Valentia, and Vespasiana, occur in the writings of the Roman historians, as early as the year A.D. 360. Sextus Rufus Festus is the first writer who enumerates the Roman provinces in Britain: according to his account, they were named, 1. Maxima Cæsariensis, 2. Flavia, 3. Britannia prima, 4. Britannia secunda. After him, Ammianus Marcellinus, in the passage above quoted in the text, A.D. 380, mentions the province of Valentia, and the origin of its name. In the Notitia imperii, supposed to have been written about A.D. 410, we have the provinces of Maxima surnamed Cæsariensis, Valentia, Britannia prima, Britannia secunda, and Flavia Cæsariensis. No other historian enumerates these provinces until the fourteenth century, when Richard of Cirencester gives the following detailed account of them.

"Britannia prima is separated by the Thames from Flavia, and by the sea from Britannia secunda.

"Flavia begins on the coast of the German sea, and is bounded by the Thames, and separated by the Severn, from the territories of the Silures and the Ordovices: it extends towards the north, and the country of the Brigantes.

"Maxima begins on the extreme frontiers of Flavia: it reaches to the lower part of the wall, which crosses the island, and faces the north.

"Valentia occupies the space between the two walls, namely, the one which I have just mentioned, and the other built by the emperor Antoninus Pius, between Bodora [Frith of Forth] and the Clyde.

"Vespasiana reaches from the Frith of Bodora to the city of Alcluith [Dumbarton], from which a line drawn to the mouth of the river Varar shews its frontier.

There was at this time in Britain a class of men named Arcani[q], but of their exact nature, and of the duties which they discharged, we have no information; the original historian refers us, for an account of them, to a former part of his work, which is now lost; and merely tells us, that their business was to travel and procure the earliest intelligence of what was passing among the neighbouring nations.

These men had now degenerated into vicious practices, and were displaced by Theodosius from their appointments: they were plainly proved to have sometimes betrayed to the barbarians the proceedings of our troops, tempted by the enormous sums which were offered them as bribes.

When the abovenamed transactions, and others of a similar nature, were all brought to a happy issue, Theodosius was summoned to court, and took his leave of the provinces which he had restored to happiness, like Furius Camillus or Papirius Cursor, crowned with the most seasonable victories. The applauding multitude escorted him down to the sea, which he crossed with a favourable wind, and reached the quarters of the Prince. Here he was received with joy and triumph, and appointed to be commander-

" Britannia secunda faces, between the west and north, that part of the Ocean which looks towards Ireland." [See Historical Documents concerning the Ancient Britons, page 389.]

By comparing this extract with the map of Ancient Britain, the reader will possess nearly all that is now to be known on this subject.

[q] Unluckily, the only MS. of Ammianus Marcellinus is defective in this place, and so it is impossible to say, whether the word is entire, or only half of a word. The word Arcani means " secret agents," which gives a better sense than Areani, as some editions have it.

in-chief of the cavalry, an office which had just been vacated by Valens Jovinus[r].

[r] Symmachus informs us, that Theodosius was honoured with an equestrian statue, [Symm. epist. lib. x. ep. 1.] The description of his victories given by Claudian, [Consul. Honor. l. 26—33. and 52—58.] in which the poet carries his arms to Thule and the Orkney islands, is of course to be understood as a poetical exaggeration. See also Pacatus Drepanius, c. 5.

CHAP. XX.

EMPERORS GRATIAN AND VALENTINIAN II.—DEATH OF VALENS—GRATIAN APPOINTS THEODOSIUS, EMPEROR OF THE EAST—GRATIAN'S NEGLECT OF HIS IMPERIAL DUTIES—DISAFFECTION OF THE TROOPS—MAXIMUS REVOLTS IN BRITAIN—DEATH OF GRATIAN—MAXIMUS DEFEATED AND SLAIN BY THEODOSIUS.

It was the unfortunate lot of the Roman emperors, that few of them reigned long enough to consolidate the success which they had gained, or to perpetuate the government, which they had so much difficulty in establishing, against the revolutionary and rebellious spirit of so many nations united under one ruler. Valentinian died after a reign of twelve years, and the throne fell to the youthful Gratian, his eldest son[a], and a younger, the infant Valentinian the Second.

In the participation of the western empire, between the brothers, it was agreed that Britain, Gaul, and Spain, should be governed by Gratian, whilst the more tranquil provinces of Italy and the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, were assigned to the young Valentinian[b].

[a] Valentinian died on the 17th of November, A.D. 375, and his son Gratian, who had already shared the sovereignty nine years with his father, held it in conjunction with his younger brother, Valentinian II. until the 25th of August, A.D. 383.

[b] Zosimus, iv. 19.

Shortly after this new settlement[c] of the western portion of the empire, Valens was defeated by the barbarians, and died near Hadrianople. This left the throne of the East vacant, and Gratian was not long in finding a worthy person to choose in the place of his late uncle and colleague. The illustrious Theodosius, who rescued Britain from the barbarians, had fallen a victim to the jealousy of the imperial court, but he left behind him a son, who, with talents equal to those of his father, united a happier fortune, which led Gratian to fix on him as the most fitting person he could select to fill the empty throne.

The choice was ratified by the consent of many applauding nations; for by a natural, though often erroneous judgment, the merits of a father are always the best passport of his son. In the present instance, the anticipation of the son's desert was justly identified with the memory of his father's services, and the choice, which displayed the sagacity of Gratian, infused new vigour into the administration of the government.

But amid the general satisfaction, which hailed the elevation of Theodosius, there was one dissentient voice, which unfortunately had power to make itself heard over some of the largest provinces of the empire. The army in Britain was at this time, if not under the command, yet greatly under the influence of Clemens[d] Maximus, a man who is said by historians, and is shewn by his deeds, to have possessed many talents

[c] Theodosius was declared emperor in January, A.D. 379.

[d] Camden has inaccurately described Maximus as commander of the army in Britain; the error is pointed out by Gibbon in his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. See Sozimus, iv. 35. The prefix of "Clemens" is given to Maximus on the authority of Sulpicius Severus, [iv. 30.]

both of mind and body. Of his previous services we have no mention, but the elevation of Theodosius gave him great offence, for he probably considered himself more deserving of the purple. In estimating the merits of the candidates, we may set aside the hyperbolical language in which Pacatus panegyrizes the great Theodosius, and the disparaging terms in which he describes Maximus, after the former was victorious, and his rival was cold in the grave.

"Once the most worthless slave in your household, he could hardly have borne the first look of your piercing eye. Could he have avoided drawing a contrast between himself and you? Must he not have reflected within himself, that you are the son of one who triumphed at the head of the Roman armies, whereas himself knew not his own father: you the heir of a noble house, and he your client[e]?" To set against this abuse of the panegyrist, we have the testimony of Orosius, who says, that Maximus was a "brave and honourable man, who would have well deserved to be raised to the rank and title of Augustus, if he had not risen to it by the violation of his military oath[f]." We find the same expressions in the mouth of Venerable Bede[g], but, as he has copied them almost verbatim from Orosius, he adds little to the testimony of that writer. But in those unsettled times, the only defect, which historians have detected in the character of Maximus, would probably be considered no impediment to the justice of his ambition, if the object of it could be obtained by the power of his arms. Neither would his lowly origin detract from his enjoyment of the imperial diadem, if it could be once securely

[e] Paneg. Theod. dict. A. D. 391. c. 31. [f] Oros. vii. 34.
[g] Eccles. Hist. i. 9.

fastened on his brow. In a succession of despotic monarchs, of whom so many had risen from the lowest rank, it is unimportant whether Maximus was a scullion in the kitchen of Theodosius, or of royal Welsh extraction, whose name in his own dialect was Macsen Wledig, and husband of Ellen Lyddog, the sister of Cynan, a chief of Merriadog[h]. Setting aside these opposing improbabilities, we may be content with the simple and rational declaration of Zosimus[i] and Bede, that Maximus was a Spaniard, the countryman of Theodosius and of others who issued from that peninsula to attain to honour in the capital of the empire. If the enterprise of Maximus had been successful, and he had reigned with the consent of the people and senate of the eternal city, it would have been, if it were then possible, an instructive contrast to draw between Maximus the lawful "imperator," and Maximus the "tyrant" from Britain, that country singularly fertile in producing usurpers of the imperial dignity[k].

But it would not be just to deny to Maximus the benefit of a doubt which is cast on the real nature of his attempt by the discrepant statements of historians. The testimony of Zosimus[l], that Maximus stirred up the army in Britain to avenge the insult, which he had received in the preference shewn to Theodosius, is unsupported by any other ancient writer. On the other hand, the words of Orosius[m] are explicit, "he

[h] See Usher's account of Maximus, and the testimonies quoted from Henry of Huntingdon, Fordun, and others, who knew no more about the subject than himself. The story that Maximus married the daughter of a rich lord of Carnarvonshire, is the more absurd, from its being entirely unsupported by ancient testimony.

[i] Hist. iv. 35.

[k] Hieron. epist. 43. ad Ctesip.

[l] Hist. iv. 35.

[m] Oros. vii. 34.

was declared emperor by the army almost against his will, and so crossed into Gaul." The same view of the case seems to have suggested the language of Prosper, that he became emperor "through a sedition of the soldiers[n]." And it is not difficult to discover, in the conduct of Gratian, satisfactory causes of the alienation of his subjects from their obedience, and of the army from its duty. The sovereign who sets aside the people his natural supporters, and surrounds himself with troops of foreigners and mercenaries, must not be surprised if those, whom he thinks unnecessary to his existence, shall at length find that they can dispense with having him for their ruler. Nor does it mitigate the indiscretion of Gratian, that the Scythian warriors who filled his court were unrivalled in guiding their fleet chargers, and in spearing the wild animals with which his numerous parks were crowded. And it did not satisfy the people, who looked for deliberative wisdom and good laws from their prince, that Gratian's bearing was singularly noble when he was clad like a Hunnish warrior, or that his spear, rivalling the arrow of one of his predecessors Commodus, could bring down successfully the fleetest animals of the chase. A company of Alans, in particular, engrossed much of Gratian's favour, and this begot great hatred to him among the soldiers, which, increasing by degrees, excited in them a revolutionary spirit. The disaffection spread rapidly; for what all men fear as likely to happen to themselves, speedily creates sympathy in the minds of others, who are exposed to ill-treatment even whilst they are still free from it. The soldiers in Britain bore the

[n] Chronicon, A. D. 384, with which agrees the author of Pseudo-Chronicon found among the works of Prosper.

character of being turbulent and bold beyond all others[o], and, as we have seen, when there was a revolution in Europe, had often sent forth an aspirant to the throne. To join in the public indignation was to do what their feelings as men prompted; to declare themselves in revolt followed in quick succession; and we may believe that Maximus, unwilling to raise the first voice in expressing the sentiments of the army, gladly, though with apparent backwardness, embraced the declaration of the soldiers, by which he was saluted with the title of Augustus. The purple robe was thrown over his shoulders, and the diadem placed upon his head; but these were speedily laid aside, and replaced by the helmet, shield, and spear, instruments better fitted for maintaining the rank which he had assumed.

We may concede to Maximus the benefit of that law which gives to every man the right of preserving his own life at the peril of another's: but the promptness with which the usurper, when the die was once cast, seconded the blow which he had struck, cannot but claim our respect for his wisdom, however his feigned reluctance to accept the purple may be thought to detract from his sincerity. It was dangerous to trifle with the chances of a defeat, even when the victor was so little given to the unnecessary shedding of blood as the amiable Gratian.

Adopting the wisest course which was open to him, Maximus recruited his army by every means in his power: Romans and Britons flocked to his standard in such numbers, that the island seemed drained of its youth, and, as historians tell us, bitterly suffered in the

[o] Zos. iv. 35.

sequel for the loss of its brave defenders, who joined the standard of the usurper[p].

With a large army of soldiers zealous in the cause, Maximus crossed into Gaul, where the public disaffection towards the emperor secured him a welcome reception. Gratian was residing at Paris without fear of disturbance or apprehension of rebellion. After vainly endeavouring to make head against the invader, he fled towards the South at the head of a faithful body of cavalry, intending to go into Italy[q], but received little encouragement from the towns and cities through which he passed, to give him hopes of successfully resisting the enemy. "Yet he might still have reached in safety the dominions of his brother; and soon have returned with the forces of Italy and the East, if he had not suffered himself to be fatally deceived by the perfidious governor of the Lyonnese province. Gratian was amused by protestations of doubtful fidelity, and the hopes of a support which could not be effectual; till the arrival of Andragathius, the general of the cavalry of Maximus, put an end to his suspense. That resolute officer executed, without remorse, the orders, or the intentions, of the usurper. Gratian, as he rose from supper, was delivered into the hands of the assassin;

[p] "Archbishop Usher (Antiq. Britan. eccles. p. 107, 108.) has diligently collected the legends of the island and the continent. The whole emigration consisted of 30,000 soldiers, and 100,000 plebeians, who settled in Bretagne. • Their destined brides, St. Ursula with 11,000 noble, and 60,000 plebeian, virgins, mistook their way; landed at Cologne, and were all most cruelly murdered by the Huns. But the plebeian sisters have been defrauded of their equal honours; and, what is still harder, John Trithemius presumes to mention the *children* of these British *virgins*." *Gibbon*, ch. xxvii.

[q] Orosius, vii. 34.

and his body was denied to the pious and pressing entreaties of his brother Valentinian[r]."

Emboldened by the success of his arms, Maximus conferred the rank of Cæsar on his son Victor[s], who was still a child, and dispatched with all speed an ambassador to the court of Theodosius. The messenger offered the eastern monarch his choice of peace or war; at the same time that he yielded so far to the dictates of discretion as to plead his master's compulsory assumption of the purple, his innocence of the murder of Gratian, and his sorrow for that melancholy event. To give a suitable answer to the ambassador of one who had murdered his benefactor, required all the wisdom of Theodosius. It cannot be doubted that he would gladly have hurled from his throne the rash invader, who was stained with the blood of Gratian, but domestic wars always sap the strength of an empire, and pity for the people, who would suffer in the struggle, led Theodosius to decide on peace. It was agreed that Maximus should retain Britain,

[r] These are the words of Gibbon, on a point of history by no means well ascertained. Compare the account given by Camden. "Gratian, marching an army against him (Maximus), and being after 5 days' skirmishing deserted by his own men and put to flight, sent St. Ambrose to treat of peace, which he obtained, though it proved a very treacherous one [Cedrenus]. For Maximus sent Andragathias in a close litter, giving out that it was Gratian's wife coming from Britain in it. Gratian coming up to it eager to meet her, and opening it, Andragathias presently started out of it with his people, and stabbed him. Ambrose was sent a second time to demand his body, but was denied admittance, because he had refused to communicate with the bishops who sided with Maximus." Gough's Camden, vol. i. p. cvii. See the original writers, Aurel. Vict. Epit. c. 47. Oros. vii. 34. Socrat. Hist. eccles. v. 11. Sozom. Hist. eccl. vii. 13. Prosper, Pseudoch.

[s] Prosp. Chron.

Gaul, and Spain, leaving Italy and the other countries of the west in the possession of the young Valentinian. By the event of this embassy, Maximus was secure in his conquests, and entered triumphant into the city of Treves, which he made the capital of his newly-acquired sovereignty.

It can hardly be supposed, that a prince of enlarged views of policy, like Theodosius, could be induced to look with favour on the cause of Maximus, because in its religious character it was connected with his own. And yet the new emperor belonged to the same class of Christians as Theodosius. The distinction of the Arian and orthodox parties continued to divide the world. The emperor of the East differed from most of his predecessors who had been Arians, but Theodosius won the applause of Europe by his strict adherence to the tenets of Athanasius. To this bias Maximus was also inclined, and unfortunately he was presented with an opportunity of signalizing his regard for one of the doctrines of his religion, by an act which altogether disqualified him from claiming any share of its moral practice or privileges. The heresy of the Priscillianists, a sect of the Manichæans[t], had at this time spread over parts of Spain, Italy, and Gaul, and prevailed particularly at Treves, where these schismatics drew down upon them the enmity of the orthodox party, even before the arrival of Maximus from Britain[u]. One of their principal opponents was Ithacius, Bishop of Sossuba, who, uncertain how far violence might succeed against the new sect, modified his indignation till the invader, of whose coming there was a current report, should arrive. Maximus had hardly entered

[t] Prosper, Pseudochron. sub an. 385.

[u] Sulpicius Severus, ii. 64, 65.

the city of Treves, when Ithacius laid before him the charges against Priscillian and his followers, and requested permission to restrain them by the hand of power. The disposition of Maximus was not averse from persecution; an art in which he excelled his precursor Theodosius. The eastern emperor secured the approbation of the orthodox for having established the theory of persecution, but Maximus is the first of the emperors who bears the odious reputation of having shed blood for the sake of the Christian religion. His cruelty towards the Priscillianists—an obscure set of fanatics which would speedily have disappeared of its own accord—has left an indelible stain upon his Christian principles, if not upon his worldly prudence also. A certain Patricius, who held the office of Comptroller of the Exchequer[x], was set up as accuser against Priscillian, who, by the agency of this suborned minister, was condemned to death, and with him two priests, Felicissimus and Armenius, who had abandoned the orthodox creed. A man also named Latronianus, and Euchrocia a Gaulish lady, were "slain with the sword."

Two of the heretics, Instantius and Tiberianus, were spared the severer sentence, and mercifully banished to the islands of Scilly, lying off the extreme promontory of Britain. The latter of these had all his worldly goods taken from him, an inhuman aggravation of punishment to one whose maintenance was to be derived from the barren rocks of Sicily, and—considering the narrow opportunities of expense which his place of exile would allow him—almost equally unnecessary by way of penance, as it was inhuman for the purpose of punishment. Of an inferior rank two names are

[x] Fisci patronus.

recorded, Asarinus and Aurelius, the latter of whom bore the rank of deacon in the Christian Church[r].

For these acts of oppression, nothing but the most absolute sincerity of the oppressor can afford the slightest extenuation; he who presumes to dictate to another the mode or practice of religious belief, should be free from all suspicion that his temporal interests will benefit by his interference with others in a matter that principally concerns themselves. Where an object less worthy than the salvation of souls may be discerned, we may reasonably hesitate in our judgment, until we are satisfied that religious oppression is for the benefit of the sufferer, and, when this conviction is arrived at, we shall not commend him who has had recourse to such dangerous remedies, whilst in mercy to future victims, we may deprive him of the power to injure. But the conduct of Maximus is not free from the most sinister interpretation. Whilst, in maintaining the true orthodox faith, he might disarm the enmity, and perhaps gain the alliance of Theodosius, the young Valentinian, who was still nominally the emperor in Italy, belonged to the Arian communion, and the eyes of Maximus looked out wistfully from Gaul over the fertile fields of the south, from the possession of which he was excluded by his treaty with Theodosius. But, if Maximus could commend himself to the good wishes of the Italians by his services in the orthodox cause, the heretical Valentinian might fall before him, almost without a struggle: so strong, at the latter end of the fourth century, were the religious feelings on all the points of controversy which then agitated Europe!

On the part of the young emperor, no overt act had

[r] Sulpicius Severus, ii. 64, 65.

yet been committed, which could furnish Maximus with an excuse for putting his intentions in execution. The military genius of the usurper is said to have displayed itself whilst he was in Britain, by successfully repulsing an incursion of the Picts and Scots[a]. His campaign against Gratian, though it was terminated more by the defection of the people, than by the arms of the invader, yet naturally tended to augment the military reputation of Maximus. But, in spite of these advantages, the usurper was more given to practise the arts of fraud than of force. When, by his arbitrary proceedings against the heretics of the West, and his loudly expressed indignation at the heterodox practices of Valentinian[a], he had conceived himself sufficiently secure in the good will of his people, Maximus meditated how he might attain a still higher pitch of greatness. His ambitious mind suggested to him the incompleteness of the Western empire, so long as his hated rival possessed some of its fairest provinces, and he secretly planned the destruction of the prince who stood in the way of his designs. But, to secure the conquest of Italy, it was necessary that his troops should occupy the passes of the Alps, which are the natural barriers of that peninsula.

Valentinian's war against the barbarians in Pannonia furnished a pretext, and Maximus urged the ambassador Domninus to receive for his master a body of troops to serve in the Pannonian war. "The penetration of Ambrose[b] had discovered the snares of an enemy under the professions of friendship; but the Syrian Domninus was corrupted or deceived, by the liberal favour of

[a] Prosper, Pseudochron. sub A.D. 382. [a] Ibid. 385.

[b] The well-known Father of the Church.

the court of Treves; and the council of Milan obstinately rejected the suspicion of danger, with a blind confidence, which was the effect not of courage, but of fear. The march of the auxiliaries was guided by the ambassador; and they were admitted, without distrust, into the fortresses of the Alps. But the crafty tyrant followed, with hasty and silent steps, in the rear; and, as he diligently intercepted all intelligence of his motions, the gleam of armour, and the dust excited by the troops of cavalry, first announced the hostile approach of a stranger to the gates of Milan[c]." It was in vain for the feeble sovereign of Italy to think of protecting himself by arms. If there had been even time to make preparations for defence, the lazy soldiery of Italy, enfeebled by long cessation from war, would have wanted the inclination to meet the invaders in the field, even if their emperor had enjoyed the love and confidence of his subjects. Flight, therefore, was the only safety of Valentinian and his mother Justina; Aquileia received them within her impregnable walls, until a galley, which had been secretly provided, conveyed them in safety to the dominions of Theodosius[d]. The eastern emperor no longer hesitated from any motives of public policy to oppose the progress of Maximus, and it has been said by historians, that not the least powerful argument which led him to espouse the cause of Valentinian, was the beauty of his sister Galla, who was a fugitive with her brother and mother.

It happened opportunely for Theodosius that he had in his service a large body of barbarian auxiliaries, who had not laid aside their armour since they had

[c] Gibbon, Decline and Fall, c. xxvii.

[d] Oros. vii. 34. Prosper. Psendochron. Zosimus vii. 13.

become subjects of the Eastern empire, and their native ferocity, which was still untamed, might, with safety and advantage to the public, be discharged against the legions of Britain*, Gaul, and Germany, which had invaded Italy. The whole of Greece now resounded with the din of martial preparation; and the usurper, as he took his seat within the walls of Aquileia on the throne which he had coveted and obtained, was told that two armies and a numerous fleet were already on their way against him. Along the shores of the Danube marched a body of troops under the command of Arbogastes, who had received instructions to penetrate into Gaul, whilst Theodosius himself led a second army through Pannonia, and a numerous fleet reconveyed Valentinian and his mother the empress Justina to resume the throne of Italy.

The emergency was too great for Maximus; he was unable steadily to view the clouds which were breaking over him. In a crisis of such a nature, the safety of a nation or of a cause depends upon the moral energies of its leader. The troops of Maximus speedily partook of the imbecility of their chief. Some sharp skirmishes took place, which ended with their throwing down their arms before the superior generalship of Theodosius. The citizens of Æmona had alone remained faithful to the cause of Valentinian, and had reaped the reward of their loyalty in being closely besieged by Maximus. The victory of Theodosius delivered them from further danger; but the emperor, without waiting to receive their thanks, pressed after Maximus, who fled as he approached. The walls of Aquileia, impregnable when manned by a faithful garrison, were unable to defend an usurping and

* Sozomen, Hist. Eccles. vii. 13.

coward tyrant from the wrath of a legitimate and victorious emperor. Maximus was seized and hurried into the presence of Theodosius: a brief sentence was passed upon him, and when the head of the usurper rolled in the dust, Theodosius felt that Heaven, and not his own arms, had exacted full vengeance for the murder of Gratian[f].

[f] Pacatus, Paneg. Theod. dict. A.D. 391, c. 38. Aurel. Victor, c. 48. Orosius, c. 34. Prosper, Chron. A.D. 388. et Pseudochron. A.D. 388.

CHAP. XXI.

BRITAIN EXHAUSTED BY SUCCESSIVE EMIGRATIONS—THEODOSIUS—CHRYSANTHUS VICEROY OF BRITAIN—ARCADIUS AND HONORIUS EMPERORS—STILICHO—PICTS AND SCOTS—MARCUS, AND GRATIAN MUNICEPS, TYRANTS IN BRITAIN, SLAIN BY THEIR SOLDIERS—CONSTANTINE EMPEROR IN BRITAIN—CONQUERS GAUL AND SPAIN—IS SLAIN BY CONSTANTIUS.

It is the lot of him who traces the history of Britain through the obscurity of the first five centuries, to be continually drawn from his subject, according as the many adventurers, whose fortunes took their rise from this island, despising the narrow limits of insular sovereignty, take flight successively to the continent, as a nobler arena on which to contend for empire. Of the tyrants, as they are invidiously denominated by the arrogance of the Roman writers, who arose in Britain, Carausius alone had the wisdom to discern the advantages which an island possesses, and the security which the intervening sea affords as a protection against foreign enemies.

The continual drain of its population in the service of Rome, had ever been an obstacle to Britain's greatness. We cannot consider the island to have contained, in the times which we are speaking of, more than a tenth part of the numbers with which it is now crowded: and the consequences which resulted from the departure of more than a hundred thousand persons, who are said

to have accompanied Maximus, can better be conceived than described. Neither were the emigrants chosen from the weaker or more useless classes of the people. They consisted of all the Roman soldiery, and the best and most vigorous of the native Britons. The loss of a large number of men, who have passed the prime of life, may be borne by a nation with comparative ease; the place of the veterans is supplied by the bountiful elasticity of nature, by which the young grow to be men, and to occupy their father's places in the Senate, or the field of battle, and at the domestic hearth; but with Maximus departed all the youth of the island, and an interval of many years must elapse before the loss of a whole generation can be supplied.

We can yield no sympathy to the usurper Maximus. He is connected with Britain in no other respect than that he issued from it to play the dangerous game of empire. His son Victor, a child who might have been safe here, was carried by his father into Gaul, where, as if in mockery of the tiara, it was bound upon his infant brow. But Arbogastes was a stern minister of the commands of Theodosius: the army of the Danube executed the duty entrusted to them, and the child Victor fell a pitiable and useless sacrifice to his father's ambition [a].

The fate of the British army, which went with Maximus to the continent, has always been a fertile subject of discussion among antiquaries and historians. It is a long-established tradition, that this gallant host, surrounded on all sides by enemies, took refuge in Armorica, where they settled, and gave their own language and the name of Britain to the province which received them. But we cannot believe that so

[a] Prosp. Chron. A. D. 388. Oros. vii. 34.

brave an army, even if during the five years that their leader reigned at Treves they were kept together in the same state as when they first landed, could remain long without finding employment in some part or other of the empire; and it would be a severe reproach to the well-known sagacity of Theodosius, if he had neglected to avail himself of their services. It is more probable that they were amalgamated with the armies of the state, which were at that time continually occupied in resisting the advances of the barbarians.

The loss of Britain's soldiers was severely felt in the north, where the native tribes of Caledonia renewed their ravages without opposition. The whole of the island, in the querulous language of its first historian Gildas, "deprived of all her armed soldiers and military bands, was left to her cruel tyrants, deprived of the assistance of all her youth, who went with Maximus; and, ignorant of the art of war, she groaned in amazement for many years under the cruelty of the Picts and Scots[b]." Their ravages were checked for a time by the interference of Theodosius, who was now in Gaul after having defeated the troops of Maximus. The courtly orator, who, three years afterwards, addressed a flattering and fulsome panegyric to the emperor, may be supposed to describe facts when he speaks of Batavia humbled in many an encounter by land, and of the Saxons driven from the seas by many a naval battle; but we cannot believe that the emperor was present in person when the Scot was driven back to his native marshes[c].

The task of repelling the invaders was committed to Chrysanthus, who, with the authority of vicar[d], restored the island to a temporary state of tranquillity.

[b] Gildas, chap. 14. [c] Pacatus, Paneg. Theod. dict. c. 6.
[d] Socrat. Schol. vii. 12.

There is a singular circumstance in the history of Chrysanthus, which would lead us to suspect that he was ill adapted to meet so fierce an enemy as the barbarians of the North. On his quitting Britain, he became prefect of Constantinople, and finally succeeded Sisinnius in the Holy Office of Bishop! That he was averse to undertake this responsibility, is testified by his repugnance to be elected: but the fact of his being thought of as a fit person for such a peaceful calling, seems to shew either that he was of too mild a character to encounter the details of a marauding warfare, or that the hierarchy of these times had already far departed from the principles which designated the first establishment of their creed.

But the days of the whole empire were now numbered, and rapidly approaching to their consummation. In 395, the emperor Theodosius died, leaving his dominions to his sons Arcadius and Honorius, who permanently divided them into the empires of the East and West. In the early part of the reign of Honorius, the province of Britain, by the prudence of the emperor's minister Stilicho, had comparative rest from the incursions of the enemy*. But when the Gothic war

* Claudian has the following lines on the success of Stilicho's armaments:

Britannia then, with cheeks that wounds display'd,
In Caledonian monster's spoils array'd,
And azure dress, that o'er her footsteps waved
Like rolling billows, thus attention crav'd.
" On me has Stilicho oft aid bestowed,
When neighbouring nations hostile movements shew'd;
The Scotch allur'd the Irish in their train,
And Tethys foam'd with foes that ploughed the main.
By him assisted, I their darts could dare;
Devoid of fear, the Pict's incursions bear;

diverted the attention of the government from so remote a province, and the legions of Britain were called away[f] to defend the seat of empire from the attacks of Alaric, the troubles, which before distracted the province, were again called into fearful operation. In addition to the assaults of the enemy from without, the inhabitants of the province were seized with a spirit of disaffection, which threw the whole island into tumult. We need not believe that Britain owed her fertility in tyrants to any other law of nature than that which prompts a people to assert their independence, if they have the power: and this should be a warning to conquering nations not to hold in thraldom their tributaries, or to impose upon them conditions which may lead them to revert to the original laws of man. Though the Romans established the largest empire which the world had yet seen, yet the fall of their power displayed features which proves that those conquerors had no just ideas of the best means for consolidating what they had acquired. The several provinces, it would appear, continued to the last to be separate states, with little or no common bond to unite them, or with no other bond than the Roman legions which were quartered in the different countries. To this may be added the tendency of nations separated from one another by natural barriers, and by the difference of language, to break up into separate states, the extent and dimensions of which better enable them to carry on the affairs of government. The times, in which we now live, are perhaps better adapted than any preceding period, for

> And Saxons, who their dubious course pursue,
> In spite of winds, upon my borders view."
>
> HAWKINS'S Translation.

[f] Claudian, De bel. Get. v. 416. &c.

trying experiments in legislation: the decay of national prejudices and the spread of all kinds of literature and science, the rapidity of intercourse between the most distant people, and more than all, the strong sense of common wants and a common interest uniting all our species, excite hopes that the existing generation may hail the introduction of a rational and humane system of international policy founded upon the developement of justice and mutual rights. But the Roman polity, which began in a commonwealth, ended in a despotism, which never for an instant relaxed its hold over the lives and fortunes of subject millions. It is not, therefore, to be wondered, that competitors for empire started up, and those generally from among the commanders of the numerous armies which were maintained as the necessary supports of a government, having no community of feeling with the people in the different nations which formed their empire.

In all the preceding commotions which we have had to notice in Britain, some leader assumed the reins of government with a hand sufficiently powerful to defend himself for a time against the opposition of the emperor. But now the disordered state of Britain caused the counsels of the revolters to be less decided. They first invested one Marcus with the purple, and for a time obeyed him as emperor: but Marcus was dissatisfied with the manners of his new subjects, who deposed and murdered him without mercy[g].

After him they raised Gratian, surnamed Municeps, a native Briton, to the throne, but his reign was almost as short as that of his predecessor. At the end of four months he also was deposed, and shared the

[g] Zosimus, vi. 1—6. Sozomen, ix. 11.

same fate as Marcus[h]. A third candidate appeared in the person of one Constantine, an obscure soldier, who perhaps had merits which history has omitted to record: but the petulance of a rebellious soldiery accepted the omen of his name as a proof of his worthiness to be their sovereign: and they anticipated from one who bore so distinguished an appellation, the developement of ability equal to that of Constantine the Great. This man, therefore, was speedily invested with the imperial robe, and received from all sides the acclamations of the soldiers[i]. But the fate of his predecessors was a lesson to Constantine, that he should lose no time in securing himself against the disorderly elements which he was called upon to govern; and he seems not to have been deficient in discernment as to the best course to adopt, or in promptness to carry his plan into execution. The distractions and even the calamities of war have often been the means of diverting the rebellious spirit of an army and of a nation. Constantine saw at once the necessity of finding employment for his men, and he determined without delay to lengthen his chance of life by extending his precarious sovereignty beyond the narrow limits of Britain. In pursuance of this resolution, and with the example of Maximus before his eyes, he lost no time in transporting his army to the coast of Gaul.

[h] Orosius, c. 40. Zosimus, vi. 1—6. Sozomen, ix. 11. Olympiodorus apud Photium.

[i] For the history of Constantine, see the following authorities: Olympiod. ap. Photium. Oros. c. 40, 42. Zosimus, v. 27. 43. vi. 2. Sozom. ix. 11. Prosp. Chron. et Pseudochron. Procopius [Bell. Van. i. 2.] calls Constantine οὐκ ἀφανῆ ἄνδρα, "a man not far from obscure," but the authority of Procopius is of no weight in such a matter.

The troops landed at the port of Boulogne, where they halted several days: after which Constantine erected his standard as sovereign of the Western empire. An extraordinary success attended this bold enterprise. The provincials of Gaul, harassed by the barbarous tribes who roamed over the country and plundered in all directions, hailed with satisfaction the hope of a deliverance, and ranged themselves under the standard of a Roman emperor. His two prefects, Justin and Neviogastes, commenced without delay a campaign against the roving bands of Germans, some of which by arms, and others by more dubious treaties, were brought to submission. Within a few months the whole of Gaul was reduced almost without struggle to obedience, and on all sides success seemed to smile upon the cause of the fortunate adventurer.

These successes emboldened Constantine to persist in his plans of conquest. In the early part of the year 408, the emperor Arcadius died, and was succeeded in the throne of the east by Theodosius II. This event probably had its share in distracting the attention of the legitimists from the encroachment which a rebel was making on their dominions.

But the Western empire, nominally governed by the feeble Honorius, was still protected by the arms of Stilicho, whilst it trembled daily at the threats of its formidable enemy Alaric the Goth. At the same moment messengers arrived at Ravenna, reporting the revolt of Constantine, and the rumoured death of Alaric. Stilicho, in disappointment at being obliged to desist from his Illyrian expedition, proceeded to Rome, that he might concert what should be done to oppose the revolt beyond the Alps.

As the result of his deliberations, Stilicho dispatched Sarus into Gaul, with orders to bring the head of the usurper.

This general first encountered Justin, one of the prefects of Constantine, and having slain him, together with the greater part of his men, he marched to besiege Valentia, in which he had heard that Constantine was residing at that time. The other prefect, Neviogastes, came to a parley with Sarus, and trusting too much to the plausible and specious behaviour of that general, was treacherously seized and put to death, imploring the faith of violated treaties. But Constantine speedily supplied the place of the deceased prefects, by appointing Edovinchus, a Frank, and Count Gerontius, a Briton, to the vacant dignity; and Sarus, dreading the military experience of the new officers, abandoned Valentia after a siege of seven days. He was not, however, suffered to retire unmolested: the commanders of Constantine attacked him with the greatest vigour; nor did he escape, until he gave up the whole of the booty which he had taken to the Bacaudi, who met him at the passes of the Alps, that he might secure a safe return into Italy. Sarus being thus disposed of, Constantine turned his attention to secure his territories by garrisons and military posts from similar invasions. For these dangerous passes often offered a path to the barbarians, who, availing themselves of these natural inlets, had, within the memory of Constantine himself, covered Gaul with the desolating effects of a civil war. The banks of the Rhine formed, more or less, in all ages the natural barrier of the Romans against the barbarians, and the assumption of the imperial title entailed the necessary task of defending the frontiers

on an usurper as well as on a legitimate prince. The next step, therefore, which Constantine took, was to secure the line of that large stream which divides the Gallic from the Teutonic tribes, and this work must have been attended with no little difficulty, for ever since the time of Julian, all the defences of that frontier had been neglected.

Thus every thing in Gaul seemed to end happily for Constantine; who now proposed to render hereditary the empire which he had gained. His eldest son, Constans, throwing off the sacerdotal habit which he had worn, and issuing from the cloister, renounced the hopes of a heavenly kingdom for the more tangible possession of that which he saw awaiting him. He was clothed in the purple robe, and saluted by the name of Cæsar, after which he set out for Spain, that he might bring that large peninsula under the dominion of his father; for the relations of Honorius had large possessions and much influence in that country, and Constantine was fearful of an invasion from that quarter at the same time that the army of Italy should enter Gaul on the other side. Constans therefore departed for Spain, having Terentius as his general and Apollinarius prefect of the Prætorium, besides judges and other officers both civil and military, by whose means he proposed to bring the peninsula into a state of obedience and good government. The province of Spain was, at this time, in as bad a condition as the rest of the empire, and no opposition would have been made to Constans, had it not been for the family of Theodosius. Four young men, brothers, are mentioned as having particularly distinguished themselves; Theodosius, Lagodius, Didymus, and Verinianus at the head of the regular troops of Lusitania, had from the very

beginning of Constantine's career opposed all his attempts to subjugate their country. But, finding the regular troops either unable or unwilling to maintain the war, they followed the example of the ancient family of the Fabii, and arming their own tenants and vassals, very nearly reduced Constans to the most imminent danger. But the father of Constans at this crisis sent to the aid of his son a body of barbarian troops, named the Honorian band, by whose means the war was speedily brought to a termination. Theodosius and Lagodius escaped, the one into Italy, the other to the East: but their less fortunate brothers, Didymus and Verinianus, were taken prisoners by the enemy.

All these events happened within little more than twelve months[k] after Constantine first assumed the purple, and many circumstances happened to assist him in his views. About the time that Constans returned to Gaul carrying with him the captive relatives of Honorius, the celebrated Stilicho died at Ravenna, on the 23d of August, A.D. 408, and Alaric, of whose death a false report had been spread, was still alive, threatening the emperor with the effects of his wrath, and preventing him from sending against Constantine those armies which would soon be wanted for the defence of Italy. But the good fortune or policy of Constantine, while it favoured the progress of his arms, threw a specious veil over the inactivity of Honorius. The usurper, in the true style of an eastern despot, sent an embassy of eunuchs to Ravenna, entreating forgiveness for having accepted the empire, as it had been forced upon him by the soldiery, against his own free will. Honorius listened with readiness to a plea

[k] Constantine was proclaimed emperor in 407, and the Spanish campaign occupied part of the year 408.

of necessity, which he could have answered by one as strong on his own side; for whilst he knew that his relations Didymus and Verinianus were captives in the hands of the usurper, he felt conscious that the fear of Alaric must prevent him from engaging in a more distant warfare.

In the mean time Constans, leaving Gerontius commander in Spain, and committing the passes of the Pyrenees to the Celtic troops rather than to the native soldiers, returned to his father's court, carrying with him Didymus and Verinianus. The unhappy brothers being brought before Constantine, were immediately put to death, an act of cruelty, which seems to have been dictated by no necessity of state, and was afterwards amply avenged.

The perpetration of this bloody deed did not however prevent Constantine from pursuing his ambition by all the modes which perfidy could suggest: and his hands were still wet with the blood of his victims, when he was secretly corresponding with the emperor whose kinsmen he had murdered. To secure from Honorius a formal recognition of his imperial title was an object which Constantine was eager to obtain, as a step, probably, for pursuing at a future opportunity the same policy which had guided his predecessor Maximus, and driving Honorius out of Italy.

For the prosecution of these views, Jovius, a man of erudition, and many natural endowments, appeared, in the beginning of the year 409, at the court of Ravenna. He requested in the name of his master that the treaty which had formerly been made should be renewed, and asked forgiveness for the murder of Didymus and Verinianus. His plea was, that they had not been murdered at the instigation of Constantine; and when

he saw that Honorius was affected by the mention of them, the ambassador craftily insinuated that the weight of his Italian concerns would fully justify his forbearing at present to shew his indignation against the authors of the deed, and that, if the emperor would allow him to convey to Constantine the happy intelligence of his condescension, and that there would be peace between them, he would speedily return with all the forces of Britain, Spain, and Gaul, to assist in quelling the disturbances in Italy and Rome. These terms were too favourable to be rejected, and Jovius was suffered to depart.

But the course of Constantine's prosperity, which had maintained itself against all the machinations of his enemies, was now to receive a shock from the treason of one of his own officers. After the death of Didymus and Verinianus, Constans returned to Spain, carrying with him Justus as his general. Count Gerontius, who had been left in command, was offended at this act, and having gained over the soldiers there, urged the barbarians in Gaul also to revolt. To check this rebellion was no easy task, for the greatest part of Constantine's troops were in Spain, so that the barbarians beyond the Rhine ravaged the whole country without opposition. In Britain also the inhabitants rose up, and revolting from the Romans, began from that time to live in a state of independence. Armorica and other provinces followed their example, and, expelling the Roman prefects, defended themselves from the barbarians as well as they were able, and each separate state set up a form of government for itself. To this conduct they were instigated by Honorius himself, who wrote letters to the cities in Britain, urging them to provide for their own safety, whilst he indulged himself,

according to the natural bent of his disposition, in all the indolence of royalty[l].

At the latter end of the next year[m], the death of Alaric released Honorius from his fears, and the state of Gaul seemed now to afford him a favourable opportunity for vindicating his despised sovereignty. The monarch, who has private wrongs, as well as public justice to avenge, will sooner or later find an opportunity of making his power be felt, and Constantine, like many other usurpers[n], could not hope to find mercy from him who only by compulsion had conceded to him the royal title. The brave count Gerontius, despising the empty honours of the diadem, or sensible of its uncertainty, bestowed the title of emperor on one Maximus, of whom this fact is all that has been recorded. Leaving his friend to reign in the peninsula, Gerontius followed Constans, who fled across the Pyrenees into Gaul, and taking the unhappy Cæsar prisoner, put him to death at Vienna, whilst Constantine, his father, besieged within the city of Arles, was unable to march to his assistance. At this moment, when apparently nothing could save the city from being taken, the besiegers and the besieged were both assailed by the army sent from beyond the Alps by Honorius. That emperor, arousing for a time out of his habitual lassitude, and profiting by the breathing-time which the northern barbarians allowed him, saw that his first object was to remove the rebellious aspirants to the purple, by whom the exertions of his subjects against the common enemy were so fatally distracted. The task of crushing the revolters in Gaul and Spain was com-

[l] Zosimus vi. 10. [m] A.D. 411.

[n] We may instance, in our times, the case of Napoleon in his relations with the Court of Vienna.

mitted to Count Constantius, and "the republic," says Orosius,—with more of irony than of truth, though the writer did not feel it,—at length experienced the advantage of having a native Roman for her general, in contrast with the evils she had suffered from having her armies commanded by counts of barbarian origin[o].

The approach of Constantius struck terror into both parties. The troops of Gerontius rose upon their leader, who fled towards Spain, but shortly afterwards fell a victim to their fury. But the besieged had no reason to triumph in the dispersal of their enemies. The newly-arrived army continued the hostilities which had been commenced by Gerontius. The interval, however, afforded a brief respite, and Edobic, the ambassador whom Constantine had sent for assistance, returned with an army to raise the siege. He was met and defeated by Constantius, and the disappointed tyrant, who had now been shut up four months in the walls of his capital, turned his thoughts to propitiate by treaty the wrath of the victor. He obtained from the enemy a promise of pardon, which he endeavoured to confirm by taking Holy Orders, and under the supposed protection of the Sacerdotal character, committed himself to the keeping of Constantius. The victorious general was so far true to his word, that he respected the life of his captive, and sent him to the emperor in Italy: but Constantine never came into the presence of the sovereign whom he had so long defied and deceived: for before he reached the palace at Ravenna, he met "the ministers of death[p]."

[o] Oros. c. 42.

[p] Constantine was put to death on the 18th of September, A.D. 411. See Sosimus, Olympiodorus, Sozomen, and Renatus Frigeridus apud Gregorium Turonensem.

CHAP. XXII.

BRITAIN AGAIN FREE—GOVERNED BY HER NATIVE RULERS—NOT ABLE TO ENJOY THE PRIVILEGE OF FREEDOM—THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION ALREADY CORRUPTED—THE ARIAN HERESY—THE PELAGIAN HERESY—GERMANUS AND LUPUS COME FROM GAUL.

AFTER five hundred years of warfare or of servitude, Britain was again free. The letters of Honorius were a sufficient testimony to the independence of the island; extorted, we may admit, more from the helplessness than the good-will of the Roman government. But the amicable nature of the separation spares us the painful recital of animosity and bloodshed, which have marked nearly all other struggles between a dominant people and its tributaries.

The gift of liberty came, however, too late for a nation which had passed the crisis of national existence, as the fresh air may be admitted in vain to the respiration of the patient whose lungs are smitten with an incurable disease.

In an edict[a] issued by Honorius, the seven provinces of Gaul are commanded to send deputies to Arles the capital, to consult and provide for their common benefit; but the precious seeds of freedom cannot be

[a] See the edict in Sirmond, Not. ad Sidon. Apollin. p. 147.

cast carelessly on a soil that has not been prepared to receive them; and whilst the emperor wondered at the indifference with which the people received the valued gift, they may have viewed the boon with the same suspicion which always accompanies the bounties of a tyrant.

A nation, left to its own resources, must necessarily establish some form of government, if only to protect them from the evils of anarchy; but the exact form which the administration will assume, depends principally upon other circumstances, often as much the result of accident as design. The commercial tendency[b] of Great Britain is of modern growth, for until a recent date its inhabitants have been engaged almost exclusively in the pursuits of agriculture and the pasturing of cattle. The first view of Britain, opened to the contemplation of the world by the invasion of Julius Cæsar, displays a picture of rustic and pastoral life; the population were equally dispersed over the surface of the island, and their towns were rude fortresses erected on eminences or in the depths of the forest, affording no temptations of residence or home, except when the people fled to them for protection from an enemy.

During the dominion of the Romans, cities would naturally arise, with the increase and growth of luxury and refinement which always attend on the progress of a conquering people. It is probable that these cities were erected on the same sites where the rude log-fortresses of the Britons had formerly stood. Yet the

[b] Until the present, or the end of the last century, the commerce of the country was almost entirely in the hands of the Flemings, Lombards, French, and other foreigners, refugees, or residents in this country.

remains of these which have passed down to posterity, or have been turned up in our own times by the operations of the plough, are insignificant monuments of the Roman name, and not worthy to be compared with the Cyclopean walls of Argos and Mycenæ, or the Colossian relics of Pæstum, Carnac, and Agrigentum.

The patient labours of the antiquary and topographer may produce many facts illustrative of the details of Roman architecture, which however throw little light upon the general view which history delights to take, and give us little practical information concerning the municipal privileges of towns, their population, public buildings, laws, customs, and jurisprudence. The most striking memorials of the Roman dominion in Britain are their military roads, which traverse the island in different directions, going, like the people who constructed them, straight to their mark, and surmounting all the difficulties of the country with the same perseverance which bent so many nations beneath the Roman yoke. These military ways are almost the only public remains of the Roman rule. The spade even now continually disinters some remnant of a Roman villa, but nothing like a connected series of houses has yet been found to give us the most remote idea of a Roman city. And yet in the Itineraries of Antonine, and of the Monk of Cirencester, we meet with a long enumeration of towns, cities, and military stations, which seem to belong to a populous and flourishing kingdom[c]. In the notice of the Eastern and Western empires[d], is an enumeration

[c] For more particular information concerning the Roman topography of Britain, the reader must consult Camden's Britannia, Horsley's Britain, Gough's Topography, and other similar works.

[d] Notitia utriusque imperii. The extracts from this work which concern Britain will be found in the "HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS," p. 175.

of titles and dignities belonging to the officers who had the charge of protecting the provinces and sea-coast of Britain: a summary of the legions and cohorts of soldiers quartered in the island, and the stations which they occupied. But a military people seldom leave durable monuments of art behind them. The turning of the sod, by which a Roman camp was protected, would alone point out its site, when the troops, who fortified it, had departed to other scenes of action. The Gothic nations of the middle ages, among whom conquest was synonymous with the occupation of land and the erection of fortified residences upon it, have alone left behind them those gigantic castles, which seem calculated to endure as long as the solid rock from which they were hewn.

But the letters of Honorius, by which the independence of the island was conceded, were addressed to the cities of Britain[e], and we gather from the general tenour of the ancient authorities that these amounted to thirty-three in number[f], and that there were altogether ninety-two towns which had arrived at considerable importance[g]. It is hard to conceive that the magnitude even of the cities in Britain would entitle them to a comparison with those of Gaul or Italy; for the troubled period of the Roman dominion was little favourable to the increase of towns or of population. Neither do an agricultural or pastoral people readily

[e] The few remarks which Gibbon has devoted to this subject, shew that he grasped the truth as usual with wonderful accuracy of discrimination. See Zosimus, vi. 10.

[f] These cities are enumerated in some of the MSS. of Nennius; but this writer is so interpolated, that nothing must be taken for granted, which rests on his authority alone.

[g] Richard of Cirencester.

consent to be crowded into the confined streets of towns and cities. If therefore a portion of the British people were in the possession of municipal rights when Honorius released them from the last feeble restraint of the Roman supremacy, it is probable that the greater part of them were still scattered throughout the country under the dominion of petty rulers or priests, and living in a state somewhat similar to that of their ancestors, when they were disturbed by the invasion of Julius Cæsar. The different classes then of the British people presented the germs of distinct principles of government. Cities have always inclined to a democratic bias, whilst the country population, living at a distance from one another, and assembling with difficulty to discuss matters of common interest, have generally fallen under the influence of their nobles, each of whom exercises almost absolute power over the inhabitants of his own neighbourhood. But the government of chiefs depicts a nation but half emerged from barbarism, and it is to be feared that the state of Britain, when it was abandoned by the Romans, was the more unfavourable for separate existence and self-defence, because its people had become unable to wield the rude weapons and practise the simple warfare of their forefathers, whilst from the prudence of their conquerors they had not acquired the more regular knowledge of the military art.

The introduction of Christianity is said to have produced a great amelioration of manners and of social life throughout the whole of Europe. But Britain profited less by it than the rest of the world. Continued wars with the barbarians, and the numerous rebellions against the emperor's authority which took their rise in Britain, must have acted as antidotes

against the humanizing influences of religion: and a diligent study of ecclesiastical history will lead to the conclusion, that when the tenets of the mild and gentle Jesus reached Britain, they had become fearfully amalgamated with the strife of doctrine, and the animosity which religious controversy has never failed to engender. The Britons in particular were not backward to enter the arena of polemical theology, and the whole island was thrown into a state of religious revolution, even when the Picts and Scots were pillaging and murdering in all directions. So early as the beginning of the fourth century, the Arian heresy had found its way into Britain, and tainted large numbers of her sons with its pestilential breath. But in the next generation, our country was destined to play a more distinguished part in the heretical dramas which were at that time so frequent.

In the fifth century, the doctrines of Pelagius, a bold and unscrupulous churchman, occupied the attention of all Europe, and drew down upon him the animadversion and condemnation of the orthodox. The promulgator of this heresy is said to have been a Welshman, named Morgan, who changed his name, which in his native tongue signified the "Sea," into the more classic appellation Pelagius, a word which in Greek bears the same signification. It would be unsafe to assert this etymology as an historic fact, because it depends on the sole testimony of modern writers; but we have the best evidence to prove, that Pelagius was by birth a Briton[h]; and St. Augustin adds, that he was called Pelagius the Briton, to distinguish him from another Pelagius of Tarentum. The success with

[h] Jerome, Prosper, Augustin, Orosius, and Bede, all state that Pelagius was a Briton.

which he propagated his doctrines argues Pelagius to have been a man of talent; and though the virulence of his enemies has heaped upon his heresy all the abuse which language can furnish, yet nothing has been brought forwards against his practice and conduct, or subversive of the fundamental laws of morality. Before Pelagius became known as the author of the heresy which bears his name, he had already acquired reputation by his writings; and a Treatise on "Faith in the Holy Trinity in three books," whilst it deceived the most orthodox teachers, was held in so much esteem, that it was deemed a necessary portion of an orthodox library[1]. A work of "Eulogies, taken out of the Divine Scriptures," also attested the literary talents of the young heresiarch. When Pelagius began to entertain heterodox opinions, we have no means of ascertaining; but he first comes into notice as a teacher of unsound doctrine about the year 405; and so great was the alarm occasioned in the Church by the tendency of his tenets, that within ten years, they were publicly condemned at Rome and Carthage. But the agitation which this controversy produced was felt only on the surface of society. The monks and clergy, who pass their lives in the contemplation of such questions, will always be roused by an attempt to disturb the modes of belief which are the axioms of their profession, but the people at large took little part in a dispute which was above their comprehension. We should probably have known as little of the peculiar doctrines of Pelagius, as of the mysteries of Isis or of Samothrace, if all the history of the times had not come down to us from the pen of ecclesiastics, who have magnified the most

[1] Tres necessarios libros, is the expression of Gennadius, Catal. vir. ill.

trifling circumstance connected with the Church, to the comparative neglect of other subjects which have at other times been deemed equally worthy to be recorded in the pages of the historian.

For this reason we possess a full account of the nature of the doctrines which were condemned by the censures of the Church. Pelagius maintained, that every man is inclined to do what is right by his own free will, and that each received grace from God in proportion to his merits: that the sin of Adam affected Adam only, and had no influence over his descendants; that every one, therefore, at his own pleasure may be free from sin; that infants just born are as free from taint as Adam was before he transgressed, and on this account are baptized, not that they may be purified from sin, but that they may be honoured by the sacrament of adoption[k]. In advocating these views, Pelagius used so much subtilty as almost to deceive the saintly and orthodox Augustin. "He was in the habit of putting forth his opinions under the form of queries; suggested, as he insinuated, by others relative to certain doctrines of the Church. He was also accustomed to ingratiate himself with ladies of influence and fortune, whose judgment and knowledge bore no proportion to their zeal[l]."

The friend and companion of Pelagius was Celestius, an Irish monk, "an untaught columniator," adds St. Jerome[m], "a stolid and stupid man, heavy with his Scottish porridge:" but the abuse of the pious father shews less the demerits of Celestius than the debasement of the age in which he lived. In company with

[k] Prosper Chron.
[l] Thackeray, vol. ii. p. 125.
[m] Prol. lib. i. in Jerem.

Celestius, the travels of Pelagius were extended over a great part of civilized Europe, and we may gather from the violence of their enemies, more than from direct testimony, the relative parts which each discharged in the work of propagating their opinions. "Pelagius is silent among us," says the Father of the Church of Hippo; "elsewhere he vents his calumnies: he sends into all the world his missive volumes, once worth their weight in gold, but now charged with poisons.—Silent himself, he employs that Alpine dog to bark for him, that big and burly dog, fit more to fight with his heels than with his teeth. His birth is derived from the Scots, a people near the Britons, and he ought, according to the fables of the poets, to be smitten like Cerberus with the spiritual club, that he may sink with his master Pluto into eternal silence[n]."

Another companion and disciple of Pelagius was Julian, and with the assistance of these two, it is certain that a large number[o] of persons were drawn away from the orthodox belief. In disseminating his opinions, Pelagius was indefatigable, and his travels extended over Italy, Africa, and the East, where at one time he encountered the hostility, and at another received the welcome, of the native Churches. In opposition to the new doctrines, numberless learned and laborious treatises were written on behalf of orthodoxy. Orosius, a Spanish presbyter and author of an historical work still extant, exerted himself in the defence of the true faith at the council of Jerusalem[p], and his praise is recorded in the writings of St. Augustin[q]. Prosper

[n] Id. Prol. lib. iii. in Jerem.

[o] Prosp. Chron. A. D. 413.

[p] A. D. 415.

[q] "Venit ad me religiosus juvenis, catholica pace frater, ætate filius, honore compresbyter noster Orosius." Aug. Epis. 28.

also of Aquitaine takes the same side, and brings the weapons of versification to assail the heretical Briton.

> A scribbler vile, as commonly is said,
> Against Augustin raised his snake-like head;
> In caverns lurking, from the light conceal'd,
> The cunning reptile stood at last reveal'd.
> Among the sea-green Britons he was fed,
> Or in Campania's plains the snake was bred.
> Let him bring forth, exposed to public view,
> His cherished maxims, be they old or new.
> In sinuous folds his coiling length he bends,
> And couching low his head from foes defends;
> On asps and basilisks in vain shall tread,
> The aged Saint shall bruise the viper's head[r].

Mid-way between the conflicting doctrines of Augustin and Pelagius stood the sect of the Semipelagians, who held, with the Orthodox, that an inward assisting "grace is necessary to enable a man to go through all the harder steps of religion; but with that they thought that the first turn or conversion of the will to God was the effect of a man's own free choice[s]."

This middle doctrine is said to have been held by two eminent ecclesiastics, Fastidius and Faustus[t], who, like Pelagius, were natives of Britain; for in the beginning of the fifth century, when every other department of life was smitten with a dearth of eminent men, the Church seems to have been most prolific; and it appears from the concurrent testimony of succeeding

[r] Prosper, Epig. col. 193. 194. [s] Thackeray, vol. ii. p. 135.

[t] "Fastidius," says Gennadius, "wrote a book, which he addressed to one Fatalis, and its doctrines were sound and good.

Faustus was abbat of Lirins in the early half of the fifth century, and afterwards Bishop of Riez. Sidonius Apollinaris says, [Ep. ix. 3—9.] that he spoke better than he was taught, and lived better than he spoke.

writers, that whilst few had courage to draw the sword in behalf of those legitimate objects of protection, their lives, their liberties, and their country, none hesitated to buckle on the armour of religious disputation, and to defend that truth which, when undefended, is the strongest.

The pernicious doctrines of Pelagius extended over all Europe, and in the year 429, or, as Bede reminds us, "only a few years before the coming of the Saxons[u]," they had reached Britain, and sadly corrupted the faith of its inhabitants. The charge of having introduced the heresy into this island has been laid against Agricola, son of Severian, a Pelagian Bishop[x]; but the inconsistency which marks the language of our Venerable Historian renders it doubtful, how far the contamination had extended in the British Church. For notwithstanding that the taint had sadly corrupted the faith of the Britons, he proceeds to inform us that "they absolutely refused to embrace a doctrine, so perverse and so blasphemous, against the grace of Christ, and not being able of themselves to confute its subtilty by force of argument, they wisely determined to crave aid of the Gallican prelates in that spiritual warfare." As these statements cannot both be exactly true, as applied to the same persons, we must suppose that a portion of the Britons sided with the Pelagian teachers, and the rest took part against them. Upon receiving the message of the Britons, the Bishops of Gaul assembled a synod, and considered what was best to be done to aid their brethren in Britain. After due deliberation, they made choice of Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, and Lupus of Troyes, to go into Britain, and confirm it in the true faith. The narrative of their mission is

[u] Bede, Eccles. Hist. [x] Prosper Chron. A.D. 429.

known to us from the pen of Venerable Bede, to whose merit it may be said that he was remarkably diligent in investigating the truth, and that, though credulous in miracles, which was the fault of his times, he carefully gives his authorities for all the wonders that he has recorded, and never tells us that he ever witnessed, with his own eyes, any thing which goes beyond the usual course of nature. The mission of Germanus and Lupus, with all its miracles and wonders, is told by our venerable Historian as follows:

"[y] The prelates readily complied with the wishes and commands of the Holy Church, and putting to sea[z], sailed half-way over from Gaul to Britain with a fair wind. There they were suddenly obstructed by the power of malevolent dæmons, which were jealous that such men should be sent to bring back the Britons to the faith, and raised storms in the air, and covered the sky with clouds to oppose them. The sails of their ship could not bear the fury of the winds, and the skill of the sailors was forced to give way: the ship was sustained by prayer only, not by human strength; and, as it happened, their spiritual commander and bishop, spent with weariness, had fallen asleep. Then the tempest, as if freed from the restraint of the only power that was superior to it, gathered fresh strength, and the ship, overpowered by the waves, was on the point of sinking. Seeing this, the blessed Lupus and the others

[y] Bede, Eccl. Hist. i. 17.

[z] Sigebert, as quoted by Sirmond, [not. in Concil. Gall. tom. i. p. 86.] refers the voyage of Germanus to the year 446, Prosper to 429. Spelman and Wilkins assign the "Council of Verulam," as it is technically called, to the year 446, as being more in harmony with the account given by Venerable Bede; but there seems to be as much probability in the one date as in the other.

awakened their elder, that he might oppose the raging elements. He, shewing himself the more resolute in proportion to the greatness of the danger, called upon Christ, and having, in the name of the Holy Trinity, sprinkled a little water[a], he quelled the raging waves, admonished his brother bishop, and gave encouragement to all on board. All then with one accord knelt down to prayer: the Deity heard their cry: the enemies were put to flight, the sea became calm, and the winds shifted about so as to impel them on their voyage. In this manner they crossed the sea, and came to a quiet anchorage on the wished-for shore. The people flocked down to the coast from all parts to receive the priests, whose coming had been predicted even by their adversaries. For the wicked spirits, which the priests afterwards expelled from the bodies of those whom they had taken possession of, declared the object of their terror, and made known the nature of the tempest, with the dangers which they had occasioned, and acknowledged that they had been overcome by the merits and authority of the saints.

"In the mean time, the apostolical priests filled the island of Britain with the fame of their preaching and of their virtues: the word of God was daily administered by them, not only in the Churches but even in the streets and fields, so that the Catholics were every where confirmed, and those, who had gone astray, corrected. Like the Apostles, they had honour and authority through a good conscience, obedience to their doctrine through their sound learning, whilst the reward of virtue attended upon their numerous merits.

[a] A mode of conjuration used by the magicians of the East, from whom it was probably introduced into Europe at an early period. See the ARABIAN NIGHTS' ENTERTAINMENTS, *passim*.

Thus the generality of the people readily embraced their teaching: the authors of the erroneous opinions kept themselves in the back-ground, and, like evil spirits, grieved for the loss of the people who were rescued from them. At length, after mature deliberation, they had the boldness to enter the lists, and appeared for public disputation, conspicuous for riches, in glittering apparel, and supported by the flattery of numbers; choosing rather to hazard the combat, than to undergo among the people the dishonour of having been silenced, lest they should seem, by saying nothing, to condemn themselves.

"An immense multitude was there assembled with their wives and children: the people stood round as spectators and judges; but the parties present differed much in appearance: on the one side was Divine Faith; on the other human presumption: on the one side was Piety; on the other Pride: on the one side Pelagius; on the other Christ. The holy Priests, Germanus and Lupus, permitted their adversaries to speak first, and, when these had spoken for a long time, filling the ears with empty words, the venerable prelates then poured forth the torrent of their apostolical and evangelical eloquence.

"Their discourse was interspersed with scriptural sentences, and they supported their most weighty assertions by reading the written testimonies of famous writers. In this manner vanity was convinced, and perfidy refuted; so that, at every objection made against them, not being able to reply, they confessed their errors. The people, who were the judges, could scarcely refrain from violence, and signified their decision by loud acclamations.

"After this, a certain man, who had the rank of tri-

bune, came forward with his wife, and presented his blind daughter, ten years of age, for the priests to cure. They ordered her to be first set before the adversaries; but these, convicted by a guilty conscience, joined their prayers to those of the child's parents, and entreated that she might be cured. The priests therefore, perceiving the submission of their adversaries, made a short prayer, and Germanus, full of the Holy Ghost, invoked the Trinity, and taking into his hands a casket containing relics of saints, which hung about his neck, applied it to the girl's eyes, which were immediately delivered from darkness, and filled with the light of truth. The parents rejoiced, and the people were astonished at the miracle; after which, the wicked opinions were so fully obliterated from the minds of all, that they ardently embraced the doctrine of the priests.

"This damnable heresy being thus suppressed, and the authors thereof confuted, the hearts of all the people were confirmed in the purity of the faith, and the priests repaired to the tomb of St. Alban the martyr, to give thanks, through him, to Almighty God. There Germanus, having with him relics of all the apostles, and of several martyrs, offered up his prayers to God, and commanded the tomb to be opened, that he might lay up the precious gifts; judging it fitting that the limbs of saints which had been brought together from different countries, as their equal merits had procured them admission into heaven, should be preserved in one tomb. When these had been honourably deposited and laid together, he took up to carry away with him a parcel of dust from the place where the martyrs' blood had been shed, wherein the blood having been retained, it appeared that the slaughter of

the martyrs had communicated a redness to it, whilst the persecutor was struck pale.

"In consequence of these things, an innumerable multitude of persons was that day converted to the Lord.

"After this, as they were returning from the place, Germanus fell and broke his leg, by the contrivance of the devil[a], who did not know that, like Job, his merits must be enhanced by the affliction of his body. Whilst he was detained there some time by the effects of this accident, a fire broke out in an adjoining cottage; and having burnt down the other houses which were thatched with reed, was carried by the wind to the dwelling in which Germanus was lying. The people all flocked together, and entreated the prelate that they might lift him in their arms and save him from the impending danger. He, however, rebuked them, and, relying on faith, would not suffer himself to be removed. The multitude, in despair, ran to oppose the conflagration; but, for the greater manifestation of the Divine power, whatever the crowd tried to save, was burnt, but whatever was under the protection of the infirm and disabled man, the flames

[a] Nothing can be more extravagantly puerile, or glaringly inconsistent, than the records of the miracles wrought by the Saints. At one moment these holy men eject Satan from a person possessed; and at the next moment they suffer themselves from his devices. The poet Ennius says justly, in allusion to such pretenders,

Non habeo denique nauci Marsum augurem,
Non vicinos haruspices, non de circo astrologos,
Non Isiacos conjectores, non interpretes somniûm.
Non enim sunt ii aut scientia aut arte divini,
Sed superstitiosi vates impudentesque harioli,
Aut inertes, aut insani, aut quibus egestas imperat,
Qui sibi semitam non sapiunt, alteri monstrant viam.

avoided, sparing the house which gave entertainment to the Saint, and raging furiously on every side of it, whilst the house, in which he lay, remained untouched amid the general conflagration. The multitude, rejoicing in the miracle, praised the almighty power of God. An infinite number of the poorer sort watched day and night before the cottage, some to heal their souls, and some their bodies.

"It is impossible to relate what miracles Christ wrought by his servant, what wonders the sick man performed: for whilst he would suffer no medicines to be applied to his distemper, he one night saw a person in garments as white as snow, who, standing by him and reaching out his hand, seemed to raise him up, and ordered him to stand boldly upon his feet; from which time his pain ceased, and he was so perfectly restored, that when the day came on, he set forth, without hesitation, upon his journey.

"In the mean time the Saxons[b] and Picts, with their united forces, made war against the Britons, who, being thus by fear and necessity compelled to take up arms, and thinking themselves unequal to their enemies, implored the assistance of the holy bishops; who, hastening to fulfil their promise of assisting them, inspired so much courage into these fearful people, that one would have thought they had been joined by a mighty army. Thus, by the agency of these holy men, Christ Himself commanded in the camp. The holy days of Lent were also at hand, and they were rendered still more holy by the presence of the priests,

[b] Individual bodies of Saxons appear to have frequently joined the Picts and Scots in making their inroads into Britain. See pages 316, 319.

insomuch that the people, instructed by daily sermons, resorted in crowds to be baptized; for most of the army desired admission to the saving water; a church was prepared with boughs for the festival of our Lord's resurrection, and fitted up in such a manner, that the camp of war looked as if it were a city. The army, still wet with the baptismal water[c], advanced to meet the enemy: the faith of the people was strengthened, and whereas human power had long before been despaired of, the Divine assistance was now all they relied on. The enemy received advice of the state of the army, and hurried forwards, not doubting of success against an unarmed multitude; but their approach was made known by the scouts to the Britons; the greater part of whose forces fresh from the font, after the celebration of Easter, immediately armed and prepared for battle. Germanus, declaring that he would be their leader, chose out the most active men to reconnoitre the country round, and discovered, in the direction where the enemy was expected, a valley encompassed with hills. Here he drew up his inexperienced troops, and acted in all respects as their general. A host of fierce enemies appeared, and as soon as those who were in ambush saw them approaching, Germanus, bearing the standard in his hands, instructed his men to repeat in a loud voice the words which he should say. The enemy advanced in security, thinking to take them by surprise, when the priests three times called out Hallelujah! The word was repeated by all with one universal shout, and the hills resounding the echo on all sides, the enemy was struck with dread,

[c] This remark supports the opinion, that baptism was in early times conferred at particular seasons of the year, and especially on Easter Sunday.

fearing that not only the neighbouring rocks, but even the very skies, were falling upon them; and such was their terror, that their feet were not swift enough to save them. They fled in disorder, casting away their arms, and well satisfied, if with their bare bodies they could escape the danger: many of them, in their precipitate and hasty flight, were swallowed up by the river which they were passing. The Britons, without the loss of a man, beheld their vengeance complete, and became inactive spectators of their victory. The scattered spoils were gathered up, and the pious soldiers rejoiced in the success which Heaven had granted them. Thus the prelates triumphed over the enemy without bloodshed; and gained a victory by faith, without the aid of human force; and, having settled the affairs of the island, and restored tranquillity by the defeat as well of the invisible as of the carnal enemies, prepared to return home. Their own merits, and the intercession of the holy martyr Alban, obtained for them a safe passage, and the happy vessel restored them in peace to their rejoicing people.

"Not long after these things, intelligence was conveyed from Britain to Gaul that certain persons were again attempting to set forth and spread abroad the Pelagian heresy. The holy Germanus was therefore entreated by all the priests, that he would again defend the cause of God, which he had before so successfully maintained. He at once complied with their request; and taking with him Severus, a man of singular sanctity, who had been disciple to the most holy father Lupus, bishop of Troyes, and afterwards, as bishop of Treves, preached the word of God in the neighbouring parts of Germany, he put to sea, and was calmly wafted over into Britain.

"In the mean time, the wicked spirits, flying over the whole island, foretold by constraint that Germanus was coming; insomuch that one Elafius, a chief of that part of the country, hastened to meet the holy men, though he had received no certain news of their coming, and carried with him his son, who suffered from a weakness of his limbs whilst in the very flower of his youth: for the nerves were withered, and his leg was so contracted that the limb was useless, and he could not walk. All the country followed this Elafius: and the priests, on their arrival, were met by the ignorant multitude, whom they first blessed, and then preached the word of God to them. They found them constant in the faith which they had before taught them, and learning that but few had gone astray, they found out the authors, and condemned them. Elafius then cast himself at the feet of the priests, presenting his son, whose distress was visible, and needed no words to express it. All were grieved, but especially the priests, who put up their prayers for him before the throne of grace; and Germanus, causing the lad to sit down, gently passed his healing hand over the limb which was contracted: the limb recovered its strength and soundness by the power of his touch; the withered nerves were restored, and the youth was, in the presence of all the people, delivered whole to his father. The multitude was amazed at the miracle, and the Catholic faith was firmly planted in the minds of all; after which, they were, in a sermon, warned and exhorted to make amends for their errors. By the judgment of all, the spreaders of the heresy, who had been sentenced to exile, were brought before the priests, to be conveyed up into the continent, that the country might be rid of them, and that they might be corrected of their errors. Thus the faith in those

parts continued long afterwards pure and untainted: and the prelates, when they had settled every thing which concerned their mission, departed to their own country as prosperously as they came [d]."

[d] Bede, Eccl. Hist. b. i. ch. 17—21.

CHAP. XXIII.

THE MISSIONS OF PALLADIUS AND ST. PATRICK TO IRELAND.

WHILST the Pelagian heresy was distracting the Church in Britain, the sister island, Ireland, up to this time almost unnoticed by historians, was imbibing the precepts of Christianity from the teaching, first of Palladius, and secondly of the famous St. Patrick. The Bishop of Rome in the year 425 was Celestine, who, urged by pious zeal for the orthodox cause, commanded Celestius, one of the disciples of Pelagius, to be expelled from Italy[a]. In the same year, he sent Palladius[b] to convert the Scots, who inhabited the north of Ireland, and the western isles of Scotland. But the missionary met with no success, and was obliged to flee to Britain, where he shortly afterwards died, in the country of the Picts[c].

Upon the death of Palladius, Pope Celestine appointed Patricius, commonly called St. Patrick[d], to fulfil the mission which his predecessor had abandoned. "Patrick was the son of a deacon named Calpurnius, who lived at Bonavern Taberniæ, near the village of Enon, places which have baffled the ingenuity of antiquaries; for while some writers assert

[a] Prosp. con. Collat. c. 21. [b] Id. Chron. Nennius, c. 55.
[c] Nennius, c. 55. [d] St. Patrick was appointed in 431.

that Patrick was a native of Gwyr, or Gower, in Glamorganshire, others maintain that he was born in Clydesdale, in North Britain; and others, that Armorica must be considered as the land of his birth. The original name of Patrick was Manuin[e], or Magontius. He was born about the year 384, and, as he tells us in his 'Confession,' was only sixteen years of age, when he was made a captive. He was carried into Ireland, and became the slave of Milchu, king of Dalraida. Escaping thence, after some years of captivity, he repaired to Rome, and long remained in that city, devoting himself to literature, and to the study of Theology[f]."

When the news of the death of Palladius reached Rome, Germanus had left Britain, and proceeded to Ravenna to present a petition on behalf of the inhabitants of Armorica[g]. Whilst he was in Italy, he became acquainted with the young Patrick, and it was principally by his instigation that the pope chose the young man to become the bearer of the tidings of salvation to Ireland[h].

In company with Patrick went an old priest named Seger, together with other ecclesiastics, whose names, with the exception of two, Auxilius the priest, and Iserninus the deacon, have not been recorded. When they arrived in Gaul, the future apostle of the Irish was consecrated bishop, and at the same time assumed the name by which he has since been known.

After all the necessary ceremonies were fulfilled, the missionaries set sail, and soon landed on the coast of Britain, where they remained a few days, and

[e] Maun, in Nennius, c. 57. [f] Thackeray, vol. ii. p. 165.
[g] Bede, i. 21. [h] Nennius, c. 56. adds, that an angel of God, named Victor, also urged the Pope to appoint St. Patrick!

preached. But, as this was not their ultimate destination, they continued their journey towards Ireland. Of their adventures in Cornwall and Wales, through which they are said to have passed, Giraldus Cambrensis and John of Teignmouth have related many marvellous stories; which, though they may not merit our belief, yet are in harmony with the growing superstition of their age, and do not impugn the claim of St. Patrick to the honour of having first converted the Irish to Christianity. It was in the year 432 or 433, that the pious emissaries of Celestine reached the scene of their labours: and it was in the fifth year of the reign of one king Loigere, and in the 5330th year of the world, as we learn from the British writer Nennius[i], that they first began to convert and baptize the people. The holy man spent forty years in preaching the Gospel to the inhabitants of Ireland, and in the course of this long ministry is said to have wrought miracles more numerous and wonderful than those which were performed by Christ Himself. "He displayed all the virtues of an apostle, gave sight to the blind, cleansed lepers, made the deaf to hear, cast out devils from the bodies of those who were possessed, raised nine dead men to life, and at his own cost redeemed many of both sexes from slavery[k]."

Even the more common and probable labours of the missionary have been aggravated, in order to excite the wonder and admiration of the ignorant. He is said to have written three hundred and sixty-five A B C's, or short catechisms, and to have founded the same number of Churches. He also ordained three hundred and sixty-five bishops, and three thousand priests. In Connaught alone he converted and

[i] Nennius, c. 59. [k] Ibid.

baptized twelve thousand persons, and in one day christened seven kings, sons of Amolgith. As if to complete the parallel between the Saint and the Saviour, the ancient writers have audaciously related, that he fasted forty days and forty nights on a hill in Connaught, called Cruachan Eli, where, 'in the air,' he offered up to the Almighty three petitions on behalf of those Irishmen, who should receive the faith of Christ. His first prayer was, that every Irishman might be repentant, however late in life; the second was, that they never should fall a prey to the barbarians; and the third, that no inhabitant of that country might be alive on the Day of Judgment: and to ensure the last of these petitions, it was promised that the whole island should be deluged by a flood of water seven years before the final consummation of all things[1].

In process of time, St. Patrick died at a very advanced age, and this fact in his history has been the occasion of a comparison instituted between him and Moses, for the grave of the Irish missionary, like that of the Hebrew lawgiver, has never yet been found; and as his very existence has in later ages been considered doubtful, it is probable, that the place of his sepulture will still remain a secret to posterity.

[1] Nennius, c. 61.

CHAP. XXIV.

ENFEEBLED STATE OF BRITAIN IN THE FIFTH CENTURY—THE BRITONS APPLY TO ROME—THEY APPLY A SECOND TIME TO ÆTIUS—THE GROANS OF THE BRITONS—VORTIGERN—AURELIUS AMBROSIUS—THE SAXONS, HENGIST AND HORSA—THE HISTORY OF THE ANCIENT BRITONS ENDS—CONCLUSION.

THE stream of British history, hardly emerging at the invasion of Julius Cæsar from its original obscurity, flows with a narrow and slender current through the first four centuries of the Christian era; but in the year 410 it loses itself in the chaos to which all Europe was then for a time reduced. The Britons, left to themselves, found it impossible to maintain their newly-acquired freedom, and the whole country became a prey to calamities, which could only be cured by a bitter and bloody remedy. To trace the events which occurred in this country during the brief period of its independence is no easy task; for, as the history of our island during all the preceding period is no more than an offshoot of the History of the Roman empire, so when Honorius by his letters cast off Britain from his sovereignty, the history of the island almost ceases to exist. If any native records of the fifth century were still remaining, whether obscured by the errors of transcribers or mutilated by the hand of time, we might still hope to extract some information concerning the period in question; but where nothing has been recorded, it is certain that little can be known, and the most painful researches of historians have failed to throw

more than a dubious light upon the interval which elapsed between the departure of the Romans and the invasion of the Saxons. Ecclesiastical legends alone, such as those of Germanus and Patrick, are found occupying the place of authentic history; and if the Britons nationally could devote to such polemical questions as the Arian and Pelagian heresies the time and talents which should have been given to the brave defence of their country from its barbarous enemies, we could scarcely regret that a nation so enfeebled should give place to successors better able to appreciate and maintain their position in a country which Divine Providence has singularly favoured both in soil and climate. But it is far from certain that the Britons bowed so readily beneath the yoke of their conquering invaders; and the length of time during which they disputed inch by inch the possession of the country, together with the final incompleteness of the Saxon dominion, shew that the descendants of those brave men who opposed the landing of Julius Cæsar were not so degenerate or feeble as other continental nations, which submitted at once to the incursions of the barbarians.

The original enmity, such as always exists between neighbouring half-civilized or savage tribes, and which had ever led to war and bloodshed between the Britons and the people of Caledonia, was now aggravated by the jealousy which the Picts and Scots would feel at the more polished manners which their neighbours had acquired from the Romans, and they now worked their vengeance to the full on the unhappy provincials. Though the spirit of the Britons was still erect and unimpared, yet the strength of the island had been diminished by the levies which had been raised to recruit the Roman armies. When the last legion,

which guarded the Roman wall in the north, was withdrawn, the last hope of the peaceful natives seemed to depart with it. Their implacable enemies, finding that the military science of the Romans would no longer protect the coveted riches of the south, rushed forth with all the haste of cruelty and avarice to invade the undefended province. The Picts, following the line of the eastern coast, poured their devastating troops through the modern counties of Northumberland, Durham, and Yorkshire, whilst the Scots, issuing from their westerly haunts in the islands, and traversing Cumberland, joined the allied band of invaders, and both together carried desolation and havoc through the whole land. The natives, in despair, turned to the still powerful name of Rome, and dispatched messengers to entreat help from the emperor*.

* In relating this embassy, the historian Gildas obscurely hints at some calamity which the Romans had received in Britain. His words are, "A legion well provided with arms, forgetful of the past misfortune, [*præteriti mali immemor,*] was appointed to assist them." Nennius is more specific, and seems to point to some deed of violence, if not of treachery, enacted by the Britons against the Romans before the final departure of the latter. "Three times," says he, "were the consuls of the Romans slain by the Britons . . . . and when the ambassadors were sent, these entered the audience-chamber with many demonstrations of sorrow, and with ashes upon their heads, carrying also large presents with them for the consuls, in acknowledgment of their crime in having slain their generals." The whole chapter is curious, but, as it contains rather the comments of the author upon certain facts, without relating the facts themselves, we gain no help from it as concerning the point in question. From the expression, "and so the Romans did alternately during 449 years," we might infer that the passage refers to the whole period of the Roman domination, rather than to the last few years of their being in Britain. And yet it is not unlikely that Ambrosius may have been the head of a Roman party in Britain, whilst Vortigern may have been the assertor of his country's freedom.

In accordance with their petition, a well-disciplined legion was sent over, and in the first engagement the cruel enemies of the Britons were defeated with great slaughter, and compelled to return to the wild haunts from which they had issued.

But the armies of Rome were wanted nearer home, and were no longer numerous enough to defend a distant province. The auxiliary legion was obliged to return to the continent, but they first exhorted the natives to stand valiantly upon their defence, and instructed them, besides other modes of repelling the incursions of the enemy, to repair[b] the ramparts which had been erected many years before by the Romans.

The slender and uncertain records of these events tell us, that the unlucky Britons were destitute of artificers who could construct a wall of stone, and that a rampart of earth was consequently raised to protect the country from the incursions of the Picts and Scots. But it can scarcely be believed that the simple principles of the masonic art had so speedily become extinct among a people, whose luxury is said to have been the cause of their misfortunes; nor should it be forgotten, that a mound of earth was in all ages the characteristic and almost the impregnable barrier of a Roman camp, and that one of the greatest of the Roman emperors had actually, many years before, constructed such a rampart to keep off the incursions of the same barbarians of the north.

We may gather from the contradictions of historians the slenderness of their acquaintance with the subject

[b] The word is 'construere,' both in Gildas and Bede, but it is almost certain that at least one of the Roman walls was still standing, and probably all three of them might with a little labour be easily repaired, and again brought into service.

which they relate, but we cannot err when we refer great results to the agency of such causes as are shewn in the history of man to have continually produced them. It is allowed us to conjecture, that the cause of the Britons was distracted by discordant interests and harassed by conflicting counsels. When such is the melancholy state of things, an enemy, impelled by the love of plunder, will hardly fail to find a vulnerable point in a wall extending across so large an island, and presenting a frontier such as a numerous army would be required to occupy or to defend. No sooner therefore had the Roman legion left the island, than the former enemies sallied from their retreats, and again ravaged the country with fire and sword.

The natives were again unable to oppose them, and probably still less able than before, for they might by this time have learnt from experience, how unhappy is the condition of that country which owes its liberty to the intervention of a foreign army. But the Britons had to choose between two certain evils; and notwithstanding that all their treasures had been swept away to pay for the assistance which their auxiliaries rendered them[c], they again sent ambassadors to ask for help. A legion was again dispatched to aid the Britons, and as they landed on the island in the autumn, when the ravaging troops of the enemy, occupied in gathering the spoil, were probably less careful of defending themselves from a surprise, we

[c] "The Roman legion went home in great triumph, having spoliated Britain of all its gold, silver, copper, precious garments, and *honey*," are the words of Nennius. "Triumph and joy" were their only spoils, according to Gildas, but these are significant expressions, and the later historian seems in this instance to have given the true version of the story.

need not seek for any other explanation of the sequel. In the turgid style of the British writer, whose querulous narrative comes the nearest to the times of these unhappy wars, "the Roman army, like a flight of eagles in the air, or a troop of cavalry by land, or a crew of sailors on the sea, hastening their unexpected course, and fixing their terrific swords on the necks and shoulders of their enemies, enacted a slaughter which can be likened only at a certain time to the falling of the leaf; and as a mountain torrent, swelled by the frequent streams of tempests, and overflowing its banks with sounding tide, with curling surface, and bold front, raising, as they say, its waves to heaven, by whose eddying currents our eyes are, as it were, dazzled, overwhelms with one billow every obstacle in its way; so did our illustrious defenders vigorously drive our enemies beyond the sea, if perchance any could so escape them."

When the Picts and Scots were a second time driven back to their forests and marshes, the Roman auxiliaries also prepared to leave the island, but before their departure they gave notice to the Britons that they must in future protect themselves, and expect to receive no more reinforcements from abroad. To encourage them to act bravely on the defensive, they aided them in erecting a wall of stone between the mouth of the Tyne and Boulness, or perhaps, to speak more correctly, in repairing the wall which Severus had formerly built between those points. They also gave the most energetic counsels to the Britons to acquit themselves like men in their own defence, and they left them the most approved models for manufacturing such arms and military instruments as would be of most service to them.

But the Picts and Scots were not the only enemies whom the Britons had cause to fear. The south coast of the island was harassed almost daily by the hordes of northern pirates ever since the days of Carausius. Among these freebooters the Saxons were conspicuous, and their attacks, though not yet threatening the conquest of the island, were nevertheless annoying to those who lived in the districts bordering on the sea. To repel these enemies, the Romans erected towers at intervals along the coast, and commanding a prospect of the sea, after which they left the island, never to return.

But the drama in which the calamities of Britain were represented, had but yet commenced. The Picts and Scots, for the modern historian has learnt never to separate the names of those barbarous tribes, speedily poured their irregular troops over the province of Valentia, which, by the adoption of the wall of Severus instead of that of Antonine, seemed tacitly given up to them, and they determined to surmount the obstacle which impeded their further inroads. The Britons, from their stations on the wall, beheld with dismay the approach of their formidable enemies. "Like worms under the heat of the mid-day sun," says Gildas, "they came forth from their holes, and, though differing from one another in manners, yet they were inspired with the same thirst for blood, and all more eager to shroud their villainous faces in bushy hair, than to cover with decent clothing those parts of their bodies which most required it. To oppose them there was placed on the wall a garrison equally slow to fight and ill adapted to run away, a useless and panic-struck company, which slumbered away days and nights on their unprofitable watch. Meanwhile the hooked

weapons of their enemies were not idle, and our wretched countrymen were dragged from the wall and dashed against the ground. They left their cities, abandoned the protection of the walls, and dispersed themselves in flight more desperately than before. The enemy, on the other hand, pursued them with unrelenting cruelty, butchering our countrymen like sheep, so that their habitations were like those of savage beasts; for they turned their arms upon each other, and for the sake of a little sustenance, imbued their hands in the blood of their fellow-countrymen. Thus foreign calamities were augmented by domestic feuds; so that the whole country was entirely destitute of provisions, except such as could be procured by the chase[d]."

Such was the state of Britain in A.D. 446, thirty-six years after its independence was recognised by the letter of Honorius, which authorized the cities to defend themselves from the barbarians. In the same year the celebrated Ætius, the formidable rival of Attila, king of the Huns, and the last stay of the western empire, enjoyed for the third time, and in conjunction with Symmachus, the empty honours of the Roman consulate.

Ætius was at this time in Gaul, making head, as well as he was able, against the numerous enemies of the Roman state. To him therefore the miserable remnant of the Britons again applied for succour, and

[d] This picture of civil disasters is too true to nature. In such a hopeless state of things, national virtues disappear, and the law of self-preservation exerts its full force on individuals: hence arise deeds of treachery, of which conquerors avail themselves, to lay whole nations prostrate at their feet.

a brief but memorable extract has been preserved of the letter which they addressed to him.

"To Ætius, thrice consul, the groans of the Britons! .... The barbarians drive us to the sea: the sea throws us back upon the barbarians: thus two modes of death await us: we shall either be drowned, or perish by the sword!"

But it was not in the power of Ætius to succour the distressed islanders. The terrible Attila was threatening both the east and west with subjugation, and every soldier that could be levied was required to oppose his arms.

The disappointed envoys returned to their native land, which they found afflicted by a manifold scourge of God. In the commotions of war, agriculture had been neglected. A famine broke out in the island, followed by its invariable attendant the pestilence, which swept off the natives by hundreds; about the same time the dreadful plague was felt also in the city of Constantinople; and, when we add to this the havoc and din of war which covered all Europe, it seemed as if the vial of the Almighty's wrath was visibly poured out over all the countries of the civilized world.

Nor can we suppose that the evils of Britain failed to extend to their implacable enemies; many of the Britons in despair yielded themselves as slaves to their invaders, and probably carried with them the infection of disease. Or it may perhaps be believed, that the havoc which the barbarians had made recoiled upon their own minds, and made them pause in the work of destruction. We read also that some of the Britons, finding no help but in their own valour, flew to arms, made a resolute stand for their lives and liberty, and bravely defeated their oppressors. Whatever may have

been the cause, their enemies withdrew from the country which they had so fearfully ravaged, and gave the Britons a short respite, which they did not improve to their own advantage. The soil, again left to its native fertility, became by the labours of the returning rustic wonderfully productive. Plenty as usual followed peace, and the whole island smiled as if its calamities were at an end. But the calm was of short duration. Peace did not bring wisdom with it, and the people had not learnt experience from misfortune. "Every kind of luxury and licentiousness sprung up, and all the other vices to which human nature is liable, and in particular that hatred of truth, which still," as Gildas declares at the time when he was writing, "destroyed every thing good in the island, the love of falsehood together with its inventors, the reception of crime in the place of virtue, respect shewn to wickedness rather than to goodness, the love of darkness instead of the sun, the admission of Satan as an angel of light. Kings were anointed, not according to God's ordinance, but such as shewed themselves more cruel than the rest; and soon after, they were put to death by those who elected them, without any inquiry into their merits, but because others still more cruel were chosen to succeed them. If any one of these was of a milder nature than the rest, or in any way more regardful of the truth, he was looked upon as the ruiner of the country, every body launched a shaft at him, and they paid no regard to the distinction between what was pleasing or displeasing to God, unless it so happened that what displeased Him was on the contrary pleasing to themselves."

But it is a painful labour to depict all the miseries which the pen of the only British writer has recorded in his melancholy style; and the historian who has

traced the tale of his forefathers from their first appearance among civilized nations to the period when they are again lost to the eye, may plead the benefit of that dramatic propriety which forbids a deed of murder to be perpetrated on the stage. The name of Vortigern, that unfortunate king whose counsels led, perhaps inevitably, to the degradation of his dynasty and the destruction of his people, will recal to the reader's recollection the last and desperate determination of the Britons, to invite to their aid one of those very tribes of enemies from whom they had suffered so many misfortunes. But it is unjust to visit the advice of Vortigern with the charge of treason as well as of indiscretion, for it is uncertain how far the Britons would have been able in any other way to extricate themselves from the evils which threatened them. The extreme of misery, to which the whole people were reduced, was a crisis which required one of those violent remedies that ordinary wisdom seldom supplies; and the unhappy people, whose national existence we have followed through five hundred years, now found themselves in the position of some of those weaker animals of the forest, which rush, by a fascination that they cannot resist, into the jaws of the monster that will devour them. It is unimportant, in contemplating the exit of a whole nation from the busy stage of existence, to ascertain whether the Saxon leaders Hengist and Horsa arrived, as exiles and adventurers on the coast of Britain, or, what is less likely, were invited expressly out of Germany to repel the northern barbarians. Those German auxiliaries were hardly less savage than the nations whom they drove back, and had been for centuries well known in Britain as pirates and marauders. To pursue our way through the stories of rapine,

blood and battles, which mark the coming of the Saxons, and to trace the faint outline of the period during which the invaders slowly but surely took possession of the country which they came to save, belongs to another theme, still more obscure and unsatisfactory than that which is the subject of these pages.

It may, however, be pardonable in an inhabitant of Britain, who rejoices in the proud situation which his little island occupies among the nations of the earth, to bestow a brief attention upon the protracted character of the contest between the Britons, and those treacherous allies, by whom they were subjected. It is pleasing to perceive, by the feeble light which our early writers have thrown over those transactions, that the same invincible spirit of national bravery which opens the view of British history, is manifest when the scene closes over it for ever. Whilst we may decline to pass a harsh judgment upon Vortigern for being, perhaps ignorantly, the instrument of his country's ruin, other names occur in the ensuing generation, which deserve to be mentioned in a catalogue of the great men which Britain has produced. The first of these was Vortemir, the son of Vortigern, and his valiant deeds against the Saxons would be almost sufficient to efface the memory of his father's misfortunes. Four times he defeated the enemy in a regular battle. His first victory was gained in the isle of Thanet, which was the place of residence assigned them when they came to assist the Britons against the Picts and Scots. The second victory was gained on the river Derwent, the third at Episford in Kent, and the fourth, near the south coast, was so signal, that the enemy fled with precipitation to their ships.

The next general who sustained for a time the arms

of his country, and checked the progress of the enemy, was Ambrosius Aurelius, a Roman by name and by descent[e]. In a battle fought at Badon Hill, near the Severn, and probably in the neighbourhood of Bath, the enemy met with a severe discomfiture, though not so disastrous to them as many which they were afterwards destined to receive. The most formidable opponent of the Saxons was the celebrated King Arthur, who is said to have come off victor in twelve pitched battles[f], and in one of them to have slain nine hundred of the enemy with his own hand. We cannot but lament the indiscretion of those who have sought by such exaggerations to augment the reputation of a brave and patriotic prince; but whilst we set aside fables as unworthy of serious attention, we are not justified in asserting, with some incredulous historians, that no such person as Arthur ever lived and fought; still less may we compromise the claims which history justly makes to the respect and attention of mankind, by considering Arthur as a personification of the sun, and viewing his round table with the twelve Paladins, as a poetical description of the Zodiac with its twelve signs[g].

The landing of the Saxon chiefs, Hengist and Horsa, in the year of our Lord 449, opens a new era to the historian of Britain, an era which demands the consideration of a separate work. It ushers in a new people and incidents of a new character, which would destroy the unity of a picture, that has for its object the delineation of a former and different system. Yet the author cannot quit his task without regretting, that his

[e] See page 383, note.

[f] For a list of these battles, see Nennius, c. 64.

[g] See "Britain after the Romans."

utmost exertions have been so unfruitful. The course of his narrative has been often broken, and only at intervals bears a distinct and definite outline. Though it has been impossible to weave into a continuous chain the narrative of events, yet many a link has been recovered to shew the system of which it was a part; as the fossil vertebræ which are dug up from the earth describe the nature and formation of the animals to which they once belonged. The remains of the people who once occupied Britain do not present such gigantic members as mark the megatherium and other monsters which the geology of the ancient world occasionally exhibits: they partake more of the character of those ferns and other vegetable substances, which, by the lingering traces of threads and fibres deposited in their fossil strata, shew that they are akin to those objects of similar species, which still exist in the living universe around us.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

Page 19. line 7. *Several of the states, into which that island is divided, sent ambassadors to give hostages, &c.*] Tzetzes, a Greek poetical writer of the tenth century, and of little authority in a matter on which all preceding historians are silent, tells us, that the Britons attempted, through their ambassadors at Rome, to bribe Cato, who was known to be a political enemy of Cæsar. The anecdote seems to be a copy of the old story of Cincinnatus: the author's own words may be translated as follows:

That Cato was not to be lured by gifts,
Learn from the instance which I here relate.
His fame had reached e'en to Britannia's isle,
And British kings, desirous of his friendship,
To him send messengers, with chests of gold.
The legates, ignorant of Cato's person,
While seeking haply who might teach them, found
The man himself, the very man I say,
Dressing his turnips with his proper hands.
Supposing him a cook, they bad him tell
That some should signify to Cato's self
That legates from the Britons fain would greet him:
'If ye seek Cato, I'm the man,' quoth he.
At first they deem'd that jeeringly he spake:
But learning he was Cato; as was fit,
They said with reverence due: 'Oh Cato, chief
Of Romans sprung from great Æneas' line,
The British kings, desirous of thy friendship,
Have sent thee chests of gold, a present meet.'
'But do they seek me for their slave, or friend?'
'A friend,' replied the train. Then Cato said:

'Quickly begone, and straight restore their gold,
For slav'ry is its price, not friendship pure;
I am their genuine friend, not bought by gifts.
And say, ye British legates, can a chief
Who lives like me, whom turnips can suffice
By mine own hand prepar'd, say, can ye think
That I want gold, or e'en what gold can buy?'
Such, as I now have said, were Cato's words.

TZETZES, CHIL. X.

Page 38. l. 11. *brass.*] The Britons are supposed to have had ornaments of gold, such as have been found among many barbarous nations. Sir Thomas Mostyn, Bart. in a letter to Roger Jones, M.D. and F.R.S. found in the Philosophical Transactions, No. 462, Jan. and Feb. 1741—2, describes such a chain found in England, and supposed to be as old as the time of Cæsar.

"Sir, *Gloddeth, Dec.* 27, 1741.

"I have received the favour of your letter, wherein you desire to be informed of the particulars of my Torques. I wish I were able to give you a better account, but have never seen nor heard of any remarks made upon it, or any account where it was found, but I think it was in this country. It is a wreath of gold, weighing, as near as I can judge, nine ounces. I believe it is without alloy, being very pliable; it answers exactly Virgil's description, Æn. v. 558 and 559.

Pars leves humero pharetras: it pectore summo
Flexilis obtorti per collum circulus auri.

"It being joined here with the Pharetra, and being very proper for carrying a quiver, inclines me to think, that the Gauls, from whom the Romans took it, used it for that purpose; but among the latter it seems to have been worn as an ornament, rather than a thing of use. There are several passages in the historians, which mention its being given as a reward for military service. It is sometimes described as a chain consisting of several links; but mine is all one piece, without any link or joints, and takes its flexibility from the pureness of the metal.

"I doubt not there are many gentlemen of the Society, who can give a better account of the Torques than I can. If, for your own satisfaction, you have a mind to be further informed of the use of it among the ancients, you may, I believe, find it in a Treatise written by one John Schefferus, *de Antiquorum Torquibus*, which is printed in Grævius's Collections . . . ."

Page 217. l. 19. *that Lucius may.*] The history of King Lucius has been rendered still more suspicious by the attempts which the ecclesiastics have made to render it clear. A letter has been preserved, which purports to have been written by Pope Eleutherius to King Lucius. A copy of it is preserved in a Lambeth MS, [No. 157, fol. 1.] beginning as follows: "*Epistola domini Eleutherii papæ Lucio regi Britanniæ, qui primo suscepit fidem Christi.* Petistis a nobis leges Romanas et Cæsaris vobis transmitti, quibus in regno Britanniæ uti voluistis: leges Romanas et Cæsaris reprobare semper possimus; suscepistis enim miseratione Divina in regno Britanniæ legem Christi, habetis et penes vos in regno vestro utramque paginam ex illis Dei gratiam, &c." This letter is nothing more than a most audacious and manifest forgery.

Page 283. l. 7. *Helena.*] "This is that Helena, who in ancient inscriptions is styled Venerabilis et Pientissima Augusta, and so much extolled by ecclesiastical historians for her Christian piety, for purging Jerusalem from idols, building a church on the place where our Lord suffered, and discovering the saving cross of Christ. The Jews and Gentiles, however, contemptuously call her the daughter of a stable-keeper, because the pious princess sought for the manger in which Christ was born, and built a church where the stable had been. Hence St. Ambrose [de obitu Theodosii] says, 'They pretend she was the daughter of a stable-keeper, &c. The good stable-keeper Helena hasted to Jerusalem, and searched for the place of our Lord's Passion, and

made diligent enquiry after the Lord's manger. The good stable-keeper, who was not unacquainted with that stable-born person who healed the wounds of him that fell among thieves. The good stable-keeper, who chose the meanest employment, counting all things but dung that she might gain Christ. Nor is her husband Constantius less extolled for his piety and moderation [EUSEB.] as "a man who, utterly renouncing the superstition of the wicked in worshipping a multitude of Gods, readily acknowledged one God the supreme Governor of all." *Gough's Camden*, vol. i. p. cii.

Page 287. l. 11. *turned their eyes towards Constantine, &c.*] Among those who had accompanied Constantine into Britain was one Eroc, a German king. He is said by Aurelius Victor [Epit. 4.] to have been foremost in urging Constantine to declare himself emperor.

Page 342. l. 30. *took refuge in Armorica.*] The inhabitants of Armorica without doubt are a branch of that extensive Celtic population which once covered the west of Europe. In confirmation of this opinion we have the important fact, that all the western or most remote coasts of the different countries of Europe are still fringed by a narrow remnant of Celts. This is the case in Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Spain, and was, within the memory of man, the case with Cornwall also.

In Jornandes, ch. 65. we find a notice of a British army of 12000 men, invited by the emperor Anthemius to assist him against Euric, king of the Goths, who attempted to occupy Gaul. Their King is named Riothimus.

Page 368. l. 20. *chaos.*] After the Romans had entirely left Britain, and the Saxons began to occupy it, the island soon became as completely unknown to the rest of Europe as it was before the invasion of Cæsar. The following story extracted from Procopius, the most celebrated writer of the sixth century, will shew what absurd notions were prevalent in his time concerning this country.

"About this time, war and contest arose between the nation of the Varni and the insular soldiers who dwell in the island called Brittia, from the following cause. The Varni are seated beyond the river Ister: and they extend as far as the Northern Ocean, and the river Rhine, which separates them* from the Franks and the other nations situated in this quarter. The whole of those, who formerly dwelt on either side of the river Rhine, had each a peculiar name; of which one tribe is called Germans, a name commonly applied to all. In this [Northern] Ocean lies the island Brittia, not far from the continent, but as much as two hundred stadia, right opposite to the outlets of the Rhine, and is between Britannia and the island Thule. For Britannia lies somewhere towards the setting sun, at the extremity of the country of the Spaniards, distant from the continent not less than four thousand stadia. But Brittia* lies at the hindermost extremity of Gaul where it borders on the ocean, that is to say, to the north of Spain and Britain: whereas Thule, so far as is known to men, lies at the farthest extremity of the ocean towards the north: but matters relating to Britain and Thule have been discoursed of in our former narrative. Three very numerous nations possess Brittia, over each of which a king presides; which nations are named Angili, Phrissones, and those surnamed from the island, Brittones; so great indeed appears the fecundity of these nations, that every year vast numbers migrating thence with their wives and children go to the Franks; who colonize them in such places as seem the most desert parts of their country; and upon this circumstance, they say, they found a claim to the island. Insomuch indeed, that, not long since, the king of the Franks dispatching some of his own people on an embassy to the emperor Justinian at Byzantium, sent with them also certain of the Angili; thus making a show as though this island also was ruled by him. Such then are the matters relating to the island called Brittia.

"Not long ere this, a certain man named Hermegisclus

* The absurdity of distinguishing Brittia and Britannia as two different islands, must be apparent to every reader.

ruled over the Varni. And he, being anxious to strengthen his kingdom, had married the sister of Theudibertus, king of the Franks; for his former wife had recently died, having given birth to a boy called Radiger, whom she left to his father. To him his father betrothed a virgin of Brittian race, whose brother was at that time king of the nation of the Angili, giving her great wealth under the name of dowry. This man, riding in a certain district with some of the Varnian nobility, saw a bird sitting on a tree, and croaking excessively. And then, whether he understood the cry of the bird, or having other information, he pretended that he knew the bird's predictions; he said immediately to those present, that he should die within forty days: for so the boding of the bird portended him: 'I, therefore,' said he, 'providing beforehand how you may live most securely and quietly, have made affinity with the Franks, having taken my wife from among them, and have contracted a Brittian alliance for my son. But now, as I am persuaded I must die very shortly, and as I have neither male nor female issue by this wife, and moreover as my son is yet unwedded and unmatched, I will communicate to you my views: and if they do not seem inexpedient to you, as soon as I arrive at the term of my existence, prosecuting them successfully, carry them into effect. I think, therefore, that affinity with the Franks, rather than with the islanders, would be beneficial to the Varni. For the Brittians are incapable of intercourse with you, save with time and difficulty; whereas the Varni and the Franks have only the waters of the Rhine between them. So that, being our nearest neighbours and extremely powerful, they have the facility of benefiting or of injuring us whenever they please; and they will injure us in every way, unless our affinity with them prevent it. For the superior power of neighbours is by nature grievous to men, and always likely to inflict injury; since it is easy for a powerful neighbour to frame excuses for war against such as live near him, however unoffending they may be. This then being the case, let the female islander, betrothed to my son, be abandoned, receiving as a compensation for this slight,

the whole of the wealth with which she has been honoured by us on this occasion, as the established customs of men prescribe. But let Radiger, my son, hereafter marry his stepmother, as our national usage permits.'

"Having thus spoken, on the fortieth day from the boding of the bird, he sickened, and fulfilled his destiny. But the son of Hermegisclus having received the kingdom of the Varni, by the advice of the chiefs among these barbarians, carried into effect the counsel of the deceased; and immediately renounced his contract with the maiden who was affianced to him, and married his stepmother. When, however, the betrothed of Radiger had learned these things, not enduring the indignity of the transaction, she determined to punish him for the slight he had put upon her. For so highly rated is chastity among these barbarians, that if even the mere mention of marriage occurs without its completion, the maiden seems to lose her fair fame. First, however, having sent some of her retinue on an embassy to him, she demanded for what cause he had slighted her, as she had neither been guilty of incontinence, nor of any other ungracious act towards him: but when she could prevail nothing by such means, assuming a masculine character, she proceeded to hostile measures. Immediately therefore collecting four hundred vessels, and embarking in them an armament of not less than one hundred thousand warriors, she with this force advanced in person against the Varni. She took with her also one of her brothers to conduct affairs in conjunction with her for the present; not him indeed who held the kingdom, but another who filled a private station. Of all the barbarians whom we know, these islanders are the most warlike, and they proceed on foot to their battles. So far from being exercised in horsemanship, they have never had even the chance of knowing what a horse is, since they have never seen in this island even a representation of it; for it appears that such an animal never existed in Brittia. Should it happen, therefore, occasionally to any of these people to go on an embassy, or for any other cause, to the Romans or Franks, or elsewhere where horses are used, and

it should be necessary for them to proceed on horseback, then have they no device whatever for mounting, but other men lifting them up, place them on the horses; and, when wishing to dismount, they lift them again, and place them on the ground. Neither indeed are the Varni horsemen, but men who fight altogether on foot. Such then are these barbarians: neither in this expedition was there a single person unemployed in the vessels, each man taking an oar; nor do these islanders make use of sails, their navigation being effected by rowing only.

"When, therefore, they had reached the continent, the virgin who commanded them having built a strong fortification very near the outlet of the river Rhine, remained herself on that spot with some few persons; but her brother she ordered with the whole remaining army to proceed against her enemies. The Varni had pitched their camp not far from the shore of the ocean and the outlet of the Rhine: here the Angili speedily arriving, they mutually engaged, and the Varni were completely defeated: many of them fell in the encounter; the rest, with their king, were wholly put to flight: and the Angili, having pursued them a short distance, as far as infantry were capable of doing, returned to their camp. These on their coming back the virgin rebuked; and severely reprehended her brother, insisting that he had done nothing effective with the army, inasmuch as he had not brought to her Radiger alive. Having selected therefore the most warlike of her forces, she dispatched them with an order, by every means to bring the man captive. These, complying with her commands, went searching diligently on all sides, until they found Radiger hidden in a thicket; whom, after binding him, they conducted to the damsel. He stood before her trembling, and fully expecting to die immediately by the most cruel death. But she, contrary to his expectation, neither put him to death, nor did any thing ungracious towards him. But reproaching him for the slight put upon her, she demanded wherefore, in violation of the covenant, he had married another woman? more especially as she, the betrothed, had

not been guilty of incontinence: and he, alleging in extenuation the commands of his father and the solicitation of the chiefs, had recourse to entreaties, and blended his excuse with many supplications, casting the blame upon necessity. Moreover, he professed that, if she were willing, he would marry her; and would atone for his former misdeeds by his future actions. And when these things pleased the damsel, Radiger was both released from his bonds, and honoured with other marks of kindness; whereupon he immediately renounced the sister of Theudibert, and married the Brittian. Thus these matters terminated.

"Moreover, in this isle of Brittia, men of ancient time built a long wall, cutting off a great portion of it: for the soil, and the man, and all other things, are not alike on both sides; for on the eastern side of the wall, there is a wholesomeness of air in conformity with the seasons, moderately warm in summer, and cool in winter. Many men inhabit here, living much as other men. The trees with their appropriate fruits flourish in season, and their corn-lands are as productive as others; and the district appears sufficiently fertilized by streams. But on the western side all is different, insomuch indeed, that it would be impossible for a man to live there even half an hour. Vipers and serpents innumerable, with all other kinds of wild beasts, infest that place; and what is most strange, the natives affirm, that if any one, passing the wall, should proceed to the other side, he would die immediately, unable to endure the unwholesomeness of the atmosphere. Death also attacking such beasts as go thither, forthwith destroys them. But as I have arrived at this point of my history, it is incumbent on me to record a tradition very nearly allied to fable, which has never appeared to me true in all respects, though constantly spread abroad by men without number, who assert that themselves have been agents in the transactions, and also hearers of the words. I must not however pass it by altogether unnoticed, lest when thus writing concerning the island Brittia, I should bring upon myself an imputation of ignorance of certain circumstances perpetually happening there.

"They say then, that the souls of men departed are always conducted to this place; but in what manner I will explain immediately, having frequently heard it from men of that region relating it most seriously, although I would rather ascribe their asseverations to a certain dreamy faculty which possesses them. On the coast of the land over against this island Brittia, in the ocean, are many villages, inhabited by men employed in fishing and in agriculture; and who for the sake of merchandize pass over to this island. In other respects they are subject to the Franks, but they never render them tribute; this burden, as they relate, having been of old remitted to them for a certain service which I shall immediately describe. The inhabitants declare that the conducting of souls devolves on them in turn. Such of them, therefore, as on the ensuing night are to go on this occupation in their turn of service, retiring to their dwellings as soon as it grows dark, compose themselves to sleep, awaiting the conductor of the expedition. All at once, at night, they perceive that their doors are shaken, and they hear a certain indistinct voice summoning them to their work. Without delay, arising from their beds, they proceed to the shore, not understanding the necessity which thus constrains them, yet nevertheless compelled by its influence. And here they perceive vessels in readiness, wholly void of men, not however their own, but certain strange vessels, in which embarking, they lay hold of the oars, and feel their burden made heavier by a multitude of passengers, the boats being sunk to the gunwhale and rowlock, and floating scarce a finger above the water. They see not a single person; but having rowed for one hour only, they arrive at Brittia: whereas when they navigate their own vessels, not making use of sails but rowing, they arrive there with difficulty even in a night and a day. Having reached the island, and been released from their burden, they depart immediately; their boats, becoming light, suddenly emerge from the stream, and sink in the water no deeper than the keel. These people see no human being either while navigating with them, or when released from the ship. But they say that they hear

a certain voice there, which seems to announce to such as receive them the name of all who have crossed over with them, and describing the dignities which they formerly possessed, and calling them over by their hereditary titles. And also, if women happen to cross over with them, they call over the names of the husbands with whom they lived. These then are the things which men of that district declare to take place: but I return to my former narrative."

Page 5. line 4. *Stonehenge, Avebury, and the Rollright stones, &c.*] "There is," says Norden, in his account of Cornwall, p. 74, "a rock upon the topp of a hill near Bliston, on which standeth a beacon; and on the topp of the rock lyeth a stone, which is three yards and a haulfe longe, four foote broad, and two and a haulfe thicke; and it is equally balanced, that the wind will move it, whereof I have had true experience. And a man with his little finger can easily stirr it, and the strength of many cannot remove it." These Logan stones appear to have been common to many countries. Thus Apollonius Rhodius, in his Argonautics, gives us an account of such an one raised by Hercules, in the island of Tenos, as a monument to Calais and Zetes, whom he slew, because they prevented the ship Argo from sailing, when the wind was favourable.

—Ἤ τέ σφι στυγερὴ τίσις ἔπλετ' ὀπίσσω
Χερσὶν ὑφ' Ἡρακλῆος, ὅ μιν δίζεσθαι ἔρυκον
Ἄθλων γὰρ Πελίαο δεδουπότος ἀψ ἀνίοντας
Τήνῳ ἐν ἀμφιρύτῃ πέφνεν, καὶ ἀμήσατο γαῖαν
Ἀμφ' αὐτοῖς, στήλας τε δύω καθύπερθεν ἔτευξεν·
Ὧν ἑτέρη, θάμβος περιώσιον ἀνδράσι λεύσσειν,
Κίνυται ἠχήεντος ὑπὸ πνοιῇ Βορέαο.

"From Pelias' rites returned, they met their doom.
Alcides' hand, which slew them, raised their tomb
In Tenos' isle:—a mound of earth appear'd,
And one vast column on another rear'd.
Pois'd there by wondrous art, the stone above,
Touch'd by the northern blast, is seen to move."

INDEX.

Aaron and Julius, citizens of Chester, martyred, 277.
Adelfius, a British bishop, 296.
Adminius, son of Cunobelin, flees to the court of Caligula, 71.
Ætius, Roman general in Gaul, 389. applied to for help by the Britons, 389.
Agricola, his first campaign in Britain, 79. distinguishes himself under the command of Cerealis, 121. is appointed governor of Britain, 123. his reforms, 125. his campaigns, 125—150. his recal and cold reception by the emperor, 151.
Agricola, Calpurnius, commands in Britain, 205.
Alaric, threatens the empire, 345. his death, 354.
Alban, Saint, his history and martyrdom, 273—280.
Albinus, rival of Severus, 205. governor in Britain, 209. his history, 209, 220—229.
Alexander Severus, emperor, 251.
Allectus, murders Carausius and reigns in Britain, 267. is defeated and slain by the army of Constantius, 270.
Alypius, vicar of Britain, 316.
Amber found in Britain, 163.
Ambiliati, [Ambiani?] a people near Amiens in France, 16.
Ambrosius Aurelius, a Roman-Briton, 383. 393.
Ammianus Marcellinus, quoted, 306. 316.
Amolgith, the seven kings his sons, 380.
Antiquities found in Britain, of uncertain origin, 6.
Antoninus Pius, reign of, 201.
Arcadius, emperor of the east, 344.
Arcani, a class of political agents in Britain, 324.
Aristobulus, never in Britain, 192.
Aristotle, quoted, 7.
Arius and Athanasius, their disputes, 314.
Arles, synod of, 295.
Arminius, a British deacon, 296.
Armoricans, a Celtic race, 397.
Arthur, King, his exploits mixed with fable, 393.

Athanasius and Arius, their disputes, 314.
Attacots ravage Britain, 316. 319. eat human flesh, 317.
Augustus, neglects Britain, 57. 58.
Aurelian, emperor, 253.
Aurelius, Marcus, emperor, 204.
Auxilius, a priest, accompanies St. Patrick to Ireland, 378.
Avebury, of uncertain origin, 5.

Badon Hill, victory over the Saxons at, 393.
Baskets made in Britain, 162.
Bede, quoted, 273. 281.
Beric, a British prince, in exile at the court of Claudius, 73.
Boadicea, her ill-treatment by the Romans, 100. she revolts, 101. defeated by Suetonius, 108.
Bodotria, the Forth, 130. 133.
Bolanus, Vettius, governor of Britain, 115.
Bonosus, usurper in Gaul, 253.
Britain, its early history obscure, 3. again becomes free, 357. its agricultural and pastoral tendencies, 357. its remains of antiquity, 358. its religious disputes, 361.
Britannia prima, a province of Britain, 323.
Britannia secunda, a province of Britain, 323.
Brutus, first king of Britain, fabulous legend of, 47.

Cæsar's conquests in Gaul, 14. sets sail for Britain, 19. battle in the water, 21. he returns to Gaul, 27. he prepares for a second invasion of Britain, 29. sets sail at sunset, and lands without opposition, 35. battles with the natives, 36—44. Cæsar leaves Britain finally, 44.
Caledonians, their resistance to Agricola, 133. 135.
Caligula, his ridiculous expedition against Britain, 72. His tower, 72, note.
Camalodunum burnt, 105.
Caracalla and Geta, their dissolute life, 235.
Caracalla, emperor, 249.
Caractacus, king of the Silures, his brave resistance to the Romans, 25. is defeated at Caer Caradoc, 85. given up to the Romans by Cartismandua, 87. his captivity and noble bearing at Rome, 88.
Caracul, same as Caracalla, 249.
Carausius, admiral of the Roman fleet at Boulogne, 256. the war of Carus, 260. assumes the purple in Britain, 257. coins of Carausius, 263. is murdered by Allectus, 267.
Carinus and Numerian, emperors, 255.

Cartismandua, a Roman lady, and queen of the Brigantes, 87. 93.
Carus, emperor, 255.
Carvilius, a British king, 43.
Cassibellaunus, opposes Cæsar, 41, &c. his fabled letter to Cæsar, 49.
Cato, fabulous story of the British ambassadors, 395.
Catullus, his verses concerning Britain, 57.
Celestius, a follower of Pelagius, 363.
Celtic origin of the Britons, 7.
Cerealis, Petilius, governor of Britain, 121.
Cherry-tree introduced into Britain, 163.
Chrestus, bishop of Syracuse, 296.
Christianity, not taught in Britain before A. D. 120., p. 179, &c. attracts the notice of the emperor, 291. was but of little benefit to Ancient Britain, 360
Chrysanthus, appointed vicar of Britain by Theodosius, 343. made bishop, 344.
Chrysostom quoted, 189.
Cicero's letters, written whilst Cæsar was in Britain, 54.
Cingetorix, a British king, 43.
Claudia Rufina, a lady of British birth, 196.
Claudian quoted, 344.
Claudius undertakes the conquest of Britain, 72. goes to Britain, 77. returns to Rome after a stay of sixteen days in the island, ib.
Clement of Rome quoted, 188.
Clota, the Clyde, 130.
Cogidunus, a British king, tributary to the Romans, 89.
Coins, British, earlier than the Romans, none, 6. coins of Britain, 70, n. coins commemorative of the conquest of Britain, 79.
Comala, 247.
Commodus assassinated, 219.
Constans sole emperor after his brother's death, 302. in Britain, 303.
Constans, son of Constantine, is put to death by Gerontius, 354.
Constantine the Great, emperor, son of Constantius Chlorus and Helena, 283. escapes to his father in Britain, 284. sends a pacific message to Galerius, who confers on him the title of Cæsar, 289. character of, 297. invades Italy, 290. defeats Maxentius, ibid. sole emperor, 291. his supposed vision, 293.
Constantine II. and his two brothers, joint emperors, 301. is slain near Aquileia, 302.
Constantine, a private soldier, made emperor in Britain, 347. invades Gaul, ibid. raises his son Constans to the rank of Cæsar, 350. is put to death, 355.

Constantius Chlorus made Cæsar, 259.
Constantius, Count, appointed by Honorius to oppose Gerontius and Constantine in Gaul, 354.
Council of Nice, 297. of Sardica, 304. of Rimini, 315.
Crassus, Publius, discovers the tin-islands, 11.
Cruachan Eli, a hill in Connaught, 380.
Cunobelin [the Cymbeline of Shakespere] king of Britain, 69.

Diablintes, a people near Fougéres in France, 16.
Didymus, a relative of Honorius, taken prisoner by Constans, 351.
Didius Gallus Avitus, governor of Britain, 92.
Didius Julianus emperor, 211.
Diocletian emperor, 255. his persecution of the Christians, 273.
Dion's account of the expedition of Plautius, 74.
Dogs of Britain, 63.
Domitian emperor, 131.
Donatists, schism of the, 295.
Dorotheus quoted, 191.
Druids, a caste of priests, 165. Cæsar's account of them, 166. Diodorus Siculus and Strabo's accounts of the Druids, 171. Pomponius Mela's account copied from the former, 174. Pliny's account, 175. Ammianus's, 177.

Eborius, a British bishop, 296.
Elagabalus, emperor, 251.
Elephant in Cæsar's army, 52. n.
Ennius, quoted, 371, n.
Eroc, a German king, accompanies Constantine into Britain, 398.
Eumenius, quoted, 203, 264, 286, 309.
Eusebius, quoted, 188.

Fastidius, a British semi-pelagian bishop, 365.
Faustus, a British semi-pelagian bishop, 365.
Fingal, 247.
Flavia, a province of Britain, 323.
Fortunatus, quoted, 273.
Fullofaudes, duke, 318.

Galba, emperor, 111, 112.
Galerius, emperor, 283. recals Diocletian's edict of persecution, 292.
Galgacus, king of the Caledonians, his speech to his soldiers, 137.
Gallienus, 253.

Geoffrey of Monmouth, his fabulous history, 46.
Germanicus Cæsar, his soldiers shipwrecked on the coast of Britain, 70.
Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, chosen to oppose the Pelagian heresy in Britain, 366. his miracles in Britain, 369—371.
Gerontius, Count, a prefect of Constantine, 349. revolts against Constantine in Spain, 353. is slain, 355.
Gildas, quoted, 197, 313, 314.
Glastonbury, tales fictitious, 193.
Government of the British tribes, 161.
Gratian, emperor, 326. his indiscretion, 330. is slain, 332.
Gratianus Funarius, 307.
Gratian Municeps, made emperor in Britain, and slain, 346.

Hadrian, emperor, 154, 201. he crosses into Britain, 155. builds a rampart across the island, 155.
Hallelujah, victory of the, 373.
Helena, revered by the Christians, 397.
Hengist and Horsa, land in Britain, 393.
Herodian, quoted, 237.
Herodotus, quoted, 7, 11.
Honorius, emperor of the west, 344. his relations, Theodosius, Lagodius, Didymus, and Verinianus, oppose Constans in Spain, 350. his relations taken prisoner, and put to death by Constans, 351. writes to the cities in Britain, authorizing them to provide for their own safety, 353.
Horace, extracts from, 60. n.

Ierne or Ireland, mentioned by Aristotle, 8. by the false Orpheus, 9, 66.
Inscriptions, 232, 233, 241, 252.
Instantius and Tiberianus, banished to Scilly, 335.
Iserninus, a deacon, accompanies St. Patrick to Ireland, 378.

Jerome, quoted, 189, 363.
Jornandes, quoted, 397.
Joseph of Arimathea, never in Britain, 193.
Jovius, ambassador of Constantine to Honorius, 352.
Julian the Apostate in Gaul, 310. sends Lupicinus to Britain, 311. draws supplies of corn from Britain, ibid.
Julian, a follower of Pelagius, 364.
Justin, a prefect of Constantine, 348.

Justus, appointed general in Spain by Constans, 353.

Lætus, temporizes at the battle of Lyons, 227.
Lampridius, quoted, 251.
Legion, Roman, sent to assist the Britons, 385. is withdrawn, 385. probably paid for their services, 385. again sent, ib.
Lexovii, people near Lisieux in France, 16.
Libanius, quoted, 303.
Licinius, his insincerity towards Constantine, 291.
Logan stones, principally in Cornwall, 5.
Lollianus, coins of, found in Britain, 253. in Tenos, 405.
Loigere, an Irish king, 379.
Lollius Urbicus, lieutenant in Britain, 202, 204.
London, a rising city of Britain, 158.
Lucius, a British king, said to have been converted to Christianity, 211. his supposed letter to Pope Eleutherius, 397.
Lucretius, his verses concerning Britain, 59, n.
Lucullus, Sallustius, governor of Britain, 153.
Lupicinus, in Britain, 312.
Lupus, bishop of Troyes, goes to Britain with Germanus, 366.

Macrinus, emperor, 251.
Mæatæ, a tribe of North Britons, 230.
Magnentius, a Briton, slays Constans, 305.
Marcus, made emperor in Britain, and slain, 346.
Marius, coins of, found in Britain, 253.
Martial, quoted, 162, 196.
Martin, vicar of Britain, 307. slays himself, 308.
Massalia, Marseilles, 77.
Maxentius, son of Maximian, assumes the purple in Italy, 289.
Maximian, colleague of Diocletian, 255. reassumes the sovereignty, 289.
Maxima Flavia, a province of Britain, 323.
Maximus Clemens, revolts in Britain, 327. called Macsen Wledig in Welsh, 329. invades Gaul, 331. confers the title of Cæsar on his son Victor, 333. makes a treaty with Theodosius, 334. persecutes the Priscillianists, 335. invades Italy, 338. takes refuge in Aquileia, 339. is taken prisoner and slain, 340. his army said to have retired to Armorica, 342.
Menapii, people of modern South Holland, 16.
Menologies, quoted, 191.
Morini, people near Boulogne in France, 16.

Mostyn, Sir Thomas, his letter about the British torques, 397.
Mursa, battle of, 306.

Nannetes, people of Nantes in France, 16.
Nazarius, his account of Constantine's vision, 294.
Nectaridus, count of the sea-coast in Britain, slain, 318.
Nemesian, quoted, 163.
Nennius, brother to Cassivellaun, a fictitious character, 49.
Nero, emperor, 96.
Nerva, emperor, 154.
Neviogastes, a prefect of Constantine, 349.
Nice, council of, 297.
Niger, rival of Severus, 205.

Onomacritus, quoted, 9.
Orcades, [the Orkney islands,] 67.
Orestii, 149.
Orosius, quoted, 329, 364.
Osismii, people near Brest in France, 16.
Ossian's poems, 247.
Ostorius Scapula, governor of Britain, 83. defeats the Iceni, the Cangi, and Brigantes, 84. founds the colony of Camalodunum, 85. decline of his prosperity, and disasters of his troops in Britain, 91. his death, 92.
Otho, emperor, 113.
Ovid, extracts from, 60, n.

Pacatian, vicar of Britain, 299.
Paganism, still existing in Britain, in A.D. 243, p. 252.
Palladius, governor in Britain, deposed by Julian, 316.
Palladius, is sent to convert the Irish, 377.
Patricius, is sent to convert the Irish, his history, 377—380.
Paul, Saint, never in Britain, 185, 193.
Paulus Catena, sent to Britain, 306.
Pearls found in Britain, 159.
Pelagius, his history and heresy, 361, &c. Pelagian heresy is revived, 374.
Perennis, his corrupt administration, 207.
Pertinax, sent to Britain, 208. anecdote of the horse Pertinax, 209. note, is made emperor,—murdered, 211.
Peter, Saint, never in Britain, as stated by Simeon Metaphrastes, 192.

Petronius Turpilianus, governor of Britain, 109. his mild and gentle administration, 111. is put to death, ibid.
Philip, emperor, not a Christian, 291.
Phœnicians trade with Britain, 10, 11.
Picts and Scots ravage Britain, 309, 316, 343, 383, 387. checked by Chrysanthus, 343.
Plautius, Aulus, his expedition to Britain, 73.
Poetry, the earliest form of composition, 246. Remains of Gallic poetry, 247.
Polybius, quoted, 8.
Pomponia Græcina, wife of Aulus Plautius, 193.
Postumus, coins of, found in Britain, 253.
Probus, emperor, 254.
Procopius, quoted, 398.
Propertius, extract from, 59, n.
Prosper, of Aquitaine, 330, 365.
Pudens, husband of Claudia, 196.

Restitutus, a British bishop, 296.
Richard, of Cirencester, 232.
Rimini, council of, 315.
Rhiothimus, a British king, leads 12000 men into Gaul, 397.
Rollright stones, of uncertain origin, 5.

Sacerdos, a British presbyter, 296.
Sardica, council of, 304.
Sarus, is sent against Constantine and slain, 349.
Saturninus Seius, a pilot, in Britain, 201.
Saxons savage Britain, 316. join the Picts in ravaging Britain, 372. see note.
Scæva, one of Cæsar's soldiers, his adventure, 51, n.
Segerus, a priest, accompanies St. Patrick to Ireland, 378.
Segonax, a British king, 43.
Semipelagians, sect of the, 365.
Sena, [Sain on the coast of France,] Prophetesses of, 174.
Severus, Julius, governor of Britain, 157.
Severus, is proclaimed emperor, 220. defeats Niger, 222. quarrels with Albinus, 223. defeats Albinus at the battle of Lyons, 226. prepares to go to Britain, 235. his campaign in Caledonia, 237. he builds a wall from sea to sea, 241. fixes his residence at York, 241. determines on a second campaign in Caledonia, 244. dies at York, 245.

Severus, bishop of Treves, accompanies Germanus on his second mission to Britain, 374.
Severus, receives from Galerius the title of Augustus, 289.
Severus, count of the domestics, slain in Britain, 318.
Silures, defeated by Ostorius Scapula, 86.
Simon Zelotes, never in Britain, 191, 193.
Stilicho, tranquillizes affairs in Britain, 344. sends Sarus against Constantine, 349. dies at Ravenna, 351.
Stonehenge, of great and uncertain antiquity, 5.
Strabo, quoted, 10. extract concerning Britain and the Britons, 58, 62. &c.
Suetonius Paulinus, governor of Britain, invades the Isle of Anglesey, 98. is recalled by Boadicea's revolt, 104. defeats Boadicea, 108.
Sulpicius Severus, quoted, 315.

Tacitus, his account of Suetonius Paulinus, 99.
Taporus, a title of Magnentius, 305, note.
Taurus, the prefect, convokes the council of Rimini, 315.
Taximagolus, a British king, 43.
Tertullian, quoted, 188.
Tetricus, coins of, found in Britain, 253.
Theodoret, quoted, 190.
Theodosius the elder, sent to Britain, 319. restores tranquillity in Britain, 320, &c.
Theodosius, emperor, 327. defeats Maximus and restores Valentinian II. 339.
Theodosius II. emperor, 348.
Thule, [Shetland, Iceland, Norway?] 67, n.
Tiberius neglects Britain, 69.
Tin found in Britain, 65.
Tin islands, called Cassiterides by the ancients, 10. the same as the Scilly islands, 12.
Titus, emperor, 127.
Tollman, rock in Cornwall, 5.
Trajan, emperor, 154, 200.
Trebellius Maximus, governor of Britain, his inactivity, 111.
Trutulensis portus, 150.
Tzetzes, quoted, 395.

Ulpius Marcellus, commands in Britain, a strict disciplinarian, 206, 207.
Usipian cohort, adventure of, 135.

Valens, dies, 327.
Valentia, province of Britain, 323.
Valentine, or Valentinian, makes a conspiracy against Theodosius in Britain, 321.
Valentinian I. emperor, 317. associates his brother Valens, 317.
Valentinian II. emperor, 326. flees from Maximus, 330.
Veneti, a tribe of Gaul, occupying the country near L'orient, 16.
Venusius, husband of Cartismandua, his campaigns against the Romans, 93.
Veranius, governor of Britain, 97.
Verinianus, a relative of Honorius, taken prisoner by Constans, 361.
Verulam, Verlamacestir, or Varlingacestir, now St. Alban's, 277. burnt, 105.
Vespasian and his son Titus distinguish themselves in Britain, 75. emperor, 116. supported by the British army, 117, 118.
Vespasiana, province of Britain, 323.
Vicars, or viceroys of Britain, 299.
Victor, son of Maximus, saluted Cæsar, 333. slain by Arbogastes, 342.
Victorianus, coins of, found in Britain, 263.
Virgil's verses concerning Britain, 59, 60, n.
Virius Lupus, governor in Britain, 230, 234.
Vitellius, emperor, 114.
Volusenus, Caius, sent by Cæsar to reconnoitre the coasts of Britain, 17. he returns on the fifth day, 18.
Vortigern, a British king, 391.

Walls, the Roman, built to repel the Caledonians, 203 note, 242. description of the Roman, 242.
War-chariots, of the Britons, 25.
Woad, used in Britain, 163.

Zosimus, quoted, 329.

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